

COMMUNITY VOICES FOR HOUSING EQUALITY: ENGAGING
TENANTS WITH IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE
BACKGROUNDS IN PARTICIPATORY
ACTION RESEARCH

by

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ABSTRACT

This multiple article path (MAP) dissertation is comprised of three interrelated and independent articles that will be submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals. Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE) is a participatory action research project that developed organically out of residents' increasing sense of urgency surrounding what many perceived to be increasing eviction rates and unfair treatment while renting. Utilizing a PAR framework created an opportunity to unearth circuits of injustice, challenge dominant discourse of low-income renters as the problem, and take action addressing gaps in policy and shifting power back into the hands of community members to increase housing stability. Chapter 1 provides an overview of CVHE, a structural analysis of CVHE findings, as well an introduction to participatory action research as foundational social work. The articles for this MAP dissertation are located in Chapters 2, 3, and 4. Chapter 2 describes the socio-historical and political context of housing, describes grounds of identity related to race, class, and country of origin, and frames CVHE participant experiences within a structural racism framework. This has been submitted to a peer-reviewed journal. Chapter 3 describes Community Voices for Housing Equality, a participatory action research project examining the experiences of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant backgrounds. This article has been submitted to an action research peer-reviewed journal. Chapter 4 presents participatory

action research as a foundation for social work practice and research, uniquely suited to understanding experiences of immigration and resettlement. This chapter has been submitted to a social work education journal. Chapter 5 is a summary and conclusion of the MAP dissertation.

To my mother Patricia. My angel along the way.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Definition of the Problem

Landlords and low-income renters with refugee or immigrant background navigate a relationship moderated by contracts, policy, and systems, with critical outcomes that can increase unplanned mobility in a community. Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE) is a participatory action research (PAR) project that developed organically out of residents' increasing sense of urgency surrounding what many perceived to be increasing eviction rates and unfair treatment while renting. We are based in Salt Lake City and our research team is composed of renters and service providers. Utilizing a PAR framework created an opportunity to unearth circuits of injustice, challenge the dominant discourse of low-income renters as the problem, and take action addressing gaps in policy and shifting power back into the hands of community members to increase housing stability. In Salt Lake County, state-run agencies and nonprofits have given significant attention to increasing the number of renters' rights workshops, however, there is a lack of system-level change regarding access to these rights. These assumptions have consistently placed the burden of proving discrimination or unfair treatment on the tenant and done little to prevent unfair treatment or discrimination.

The context of immigration and resettlement in the United States shapes the experiences of renters with immigrant and refugee background. This context includes individual and community meanings of home and the impact of cultural assumptions on policy. Context includes cultural beliefs and assumptions surrounding immigration and resettlement, locally and nationally (Finn & Jacobson, 2008). Housing, immigration, and resettlement intersect in unique interpretations of home and community. For families who have been uprooted from their homes, making a home has significant meaning. A home may be current physical spaces where a family resides, previous communities in a country of origin, as well as complex migration experiences along the way (Freund, 2015). Making a home includes personal perceptions and experiences as well as a collective community process of creating home in a new community (Freund, 2015). The meaning of home can be influenced by the conditions surrounding immigration and resettlement, shaping an individual's perception of home as having a range of meaning, from home as a place filled with hope and opportunity to a desire to repatriate and return to the country of origin (Trapp, 2015). Brun (2015) describes home as a "material base for creating agency" for individuals with immigrant and refugee background.

The context of immigration and resettlement can also be hostile. Stereotypes have perpetuated rationalization of unfair treatment and lack of access to rights. In Salt Lake City, for example, immigration has been framed around deportation and the construction of physical barriers to keep immigrants out (Cahill, 2010). Policies surrounding immigration and resettlement (e.g., determining immigration status) shape context, and these are informed by underlying assumptions or cultural beliefs. "Policies are, in effect, cultural snapshots framed by particular assumptions of what is true, right,

and good” (Finn & Jacobson, 2008, p. 44).

Housing experiences, within the context of immigration and resettlement, are shaped by policies that determine the amount and kind of resources to allocate to people who have immigrant and refugee backgrounds. Tenant-landlord law, defined in the Utah Fit Premise Act (outlining habitability requirement) and Utah Code 78B-6-801 (outlining eviction proceedings) place an emphasis on quickly removing uncooperative tenants and includes stringent documentation guidelines (see Utah Code 57-17 and 57-22 for example). Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Fair Housing Act) is aimed at protecting tenants from discrimination, but does little to prevent discrimination, and discrimination is difficult to prove (powell,¹ 2008).

Renting within the context of immigration and resettlement processes is complex, and the voices of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background have been largely left out of housing research. There is a dearth of research centering housing discussions on these experiences, let alone providing a space to challenge dominant discourse surrounding renters with refugee or immigrant background. Given the impact and complexities of renting compounded with immigration and resettlement experiences, Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE) utilizes PAR to recognize and describe the experiences of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant backgrounds and amplify these realities and descriptions as central to the housing discussion and necessary for informing change.

The complex history surrounding homeownership and segregation illustrates how race and renting have intersected overtime (The Aspen Institute, 2004). The intersection

¹ powell intentionally left lowercase at powell’s request.

of race and renting has mostly been illustrated in housing research by reference to the disproportionate number of renters who are African American, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, or Native/Alaska Native (HUD, Fall 2012). Utah is a diverse state, with around 60,000 people resettled in 2015 from over 20 countries, with Salt Lake County west side neighborhoods home to the majority of individuals with refugee and immigrant backgrounds (Mai & Schmit, 2013; Utah Department of Workforce Services: Office of Refugee Services, 2015). In Salt Lake County, people of color make up just over 25% of the total population, but account for almost 44% of the poor population (Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2013). The Fair Housing Equity Assessment (FHEA) highlights the location of racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty (RCAP/ECAP), characterized by high concentrations of poor and renting households of color (Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2013).

Importance of the Problem

Stable and affordable housing is a major contributor to secure neighborhoods and increases opportunities to improve quality of life (Evans, 2004). For example, stable housing benefits the next generation: If their family has more control over if and when they move, children may have better educational and health outcomes (Cohen & Wardrip, 2011). That being said, mechanisms are not in place to ensure housing is stable for everyone.

Most policies and practices around the tenant-landlord relationship are state specific, heavily relying on the tenant and landlord to negotiate; yet tenants and landlords look back to these policies for structure on how to respond to each other. In considering

the impact of structural racism and negative national sentiment regarding immigration and resettlement (The Aspen Institute, 2004), a landlord who is responsive to tenants with refugee or immigrant background is not reliable. Lack of responsiveness or willingness to negotiate makes it difficult to integrate the tenant's lived world with a business culture of improving the bottom line. When renters and landlords are unable to negotiate or mediate when issues arise, unnecessary forceful action occurs that increases the rate of eviction and unplanned mobility (Desmond, 2016).

Unplanned mobility, related to heavy cost-burdens of living in unstable housing, poses a risk to children, particularly in education and physical/mental health. Children who move from one school to the next may lose valuable school supports or may feel their parents' stress as a result of the unplanned move (Cohen & Wardrip, 2011; Jelleyman & Spencer, 2008). When families experience multiple unplanned moves, this affects the families themselves as well as the community as a whole. When families are constantly moving, this disturbs the valuable social networks that link community members to resources and social support (Clark, 2010, p. 6). Unplanned mobility is fairly common with low-income households; however, a gap in research exists with regards to understanding the intricacies of the tenant-landlord relationship, specifically regarding immigrant and refugee experiences (Cohen & Wardrip, 2011).

Participatory Action Research

Community Voices for Housing Equality is a participatory action research project. Participatory action research (PAR) is an epistemological approach to research that situates power in the hands of those experiencing the issue being researched.

Appadurai (2006) argues research as a human right, as critical for the “exercise of informed citizenry” (p. 168). Participatory action researchers acknowledge research as a human right, as a tool to amplify the stories and experiences of those typically silenced in social science (Fine, 1992). It brings together people affected by the issues and trained researchers to work in partnership as co-researchers throughout some or all of the research process, from the development of research questions to dissemination of findings (Cahill, 2007; Reason & Bradbury, 2001b).

PAR targets systems of inequality as spaces of change (Finn, 1994; Stoudt, 2009). When facilitating PAR, researchers take a strengths-based approach to research, building and strengthening existing networks and capacities within the community (Collie, Liu, Podsiadlowski, & Kindon, 2001). Reason and Bradbury (2001a) point out that action research “seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their community” (p. 1).

Participatory action research was especially relevant to understanding the experiences of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant backgrounds because of the urgent need to respond to issues related to housing while simultaneously challenging the dominant discourse about low-income renters as a problem. Additionally, PAR provided an opportunity to strengthen existing networks within the fair housing community, as well as between participants as they came to understand how their personal experiences of renting were shared by many.

Theoretical Perspectives

Grounded theory and Critical Race Theory informed analysis of findings from this participatory action research project. Grounded theory made it possible to examine the under-researched experience of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background. Additionally, grounded theory led to the incorporation of Critical Race Theory, as issues of race, power, and systemic oppression emerged from the stories of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background.

Grounded Theory

The research team took a grounded theory approach to gathering and analyzing data. While there are many interpretations of a grounded theory approach, this study followed a procedure outlined by Charmaz (2006), similar to the work of the originators of grounded theory, Glasser and Strauss. Analysis of data begins early when using a grounded theory approach, as researchers begin to study and compare initial data. From here, codes are developed and memos written describing the emerging researcher insights. As these codes and analytic categories emerge from the data, future focus group guides contain questions that seek to confirm and expand on emerging substantive theories (Charmaz, 2006).

Grounded theory, as described by Charmaz (2006), allows analysis and data collection to be a part of one cyclical process as opposed to two separate processes with analysis following data collection in a linear fashion. Methods, described in detail below, included focus groups and a brief questionnaire. An analysis of the data began early in the process as researchers studied and compared initial data. From here, codes were

developed and memos written describing emerging researcher insights. As codes and analytic categories emerged, researchers integrated questions into future focus group guides to confirm and expand on substantive theories (Charmaz, 2006).

Critical Race Theory

Grounded theory typically requires beginning research without facilitating a thorough literature review, to prevent inserting assumptions into interpretation of findings (Charmaz, 2006). As research moves along, however, grounded theory allows for existing theories to find their place in the analysis of gathered data (Charmaz, 2006). In analyzing the first three focus groups, Critical Race Theory (CRT) emerged as a guide to understanding tenants' experiences.

Critical Race Theorists study and transform, “the relationship among race, racism, and power” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 3). “Critical race theory amplifies everyday experiences of racism and allows for an interpretation of racism as a material benefit to white elites and psychological benefit to working class Caucasians” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 8). CRT brings intersectionality into the analysis, considering the filtering of multiple identities through policy (Crenshaw, 1991). Additionally, CRT allows for situating the experiences of low-income tenants of refugee and immigrant backgrounds within a larger picture of segregation and policy (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000).

Critical Race Theory and PAR have come together to inform the present understanding of PAR as an approach to research that “expands notions of expert knowledge; recognizes that individuals have multiple, overlapping, potentially conflicting

identities, loyalties and allegiances; complicates identity categories; and makes the political nature of knowledge production explicit” (Torre, 2009, p. 112). CVHE focus group participants grappled with hopelessness and a tenant-landlord relationship many felt was largely influenced by race. The research team witnessed issues of power and injustice threading their way through stories. We situated the experience of low-income tenants of refugee and immigrant backgrounds within a larger picture of segregation and policy (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000).

PAR as Foundational Social Work

Community Voices for Housing Equality is an example of social work research that amplifies social issues by centering the experiences of individuals with refugee and immigrant background in the housing discussion. Social work researchers can utilize participatory action research (PAR) to examine personal and community experiences with immigration and resettlement, but even with a foundation in social justice, social workers engaging in PAR is not common (Branom, 2012; Francisco, 2013).

Acknowledging the intersections of social work and PAR and its appropriateness in examining experiences of migration and resettlement can significantly contribute to the field by breaking reliance on top-down research and practice approaches that perpetuate imbalances in power (Branom, 2012).

Participatory action research is nested within social work praxis and uniquely suited to the profession (Finn, 1994; Finn & Jacobson, 2008). Possibilities of the integration of PAR and SW in examining experiences of immigration and resettlement include bringing diverse communities together (Torre, 2009), utilizing PAR as a space to

develop new subjectivities (Cahill, 2007), engaging in a critical discussion of power evolutions in the PAR process (Healy, 2001; Koirala-Azad, 2009-2010), including an ethic of reciprocity in the PAR process (Maiter, Simich, Jacobson, & Wise, 2008), and community accompaniment within PAR (Finn & Jacobson, 2008; Hall, 2001). Critical PAR holds possibility as a paradigm uniquely suited to engaging in research that unearths circuits of injustice and integrates critical theoretical frameworks throughout the research process (Fox et al., 2010; Torre, Fine, Stoudt, & Fox, 2012).

Intersectionality and Structural Inequality

Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE) is based in Salt Lake City and it was critical for us to focus action research efforts in the community we work and live in. Members of our team have experienced the issues we are researching, and as such the value of reciprocity in research is critical to our process. In other words, the research team not only contributes to the development of valuable knowledge to challenge dominant discourse, but the community itself also benefits from the addition of new action researchers and action that challenges systems of oppression. Salt Lake County is made up of diverse communities of color and the west side in particular is the poorest region of the county and home to a large number of renters who have immigrated or been resettled (Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2013; Mai & Schmit, 2013; Utah Department of Workforce Services: Office of Refugee Services, 2015). As such, we have targeted our research efforts here.

Considering Crenshaw's (1989) analysis of intersectionality and its impact on policy, the experience of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background

draws from grounds of identity related to race, class, and country of origin.

Intersectionality provides a way of thinking about multiple identities and how these intersect with power, considering how different forms of discrimination interact and overlap (Crenshaw, 1989, 2015). For example, in considering the experiences of women of color, race and gender interact to inform discrimination. With regards to the experiences of individuals with refugee and immigrant background, race, class, and country of origin intersect and have been pushed to the margins of fair housing policy. Considering the intersectionality of race, class, and country of origin has significant practice and political implications. Where Crenshaw (1989) has described the filtering of Black women's experiences through analyses that separate race and gender, so too have immigrant experiences been filtered through analyses that ensure their needs will not be addressed (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 150).

Structural inequality, related to White ownership of land in the United States, has a deep history that has shaped the current rental market and the emphasis on private property (The Aspen Institute, 2004; HUD, 2013; The Urban Institute, 2013). Housing discrimination, built upon segregation and unequal distributions, has included steering potential homebuyers of color away from predominately White neighborhoods, restricting purchasing power through redlining and withholding information, and showing people of color fewer homes (HUD, 2013; The Urban Institute, 2009). This discrimination has shaped the current trends in homeownership based on race (The Aspen Institute, 2004).

The effects of discrimination are perpetuated by policy that does not encourage investment in communities of color (The Aspen Institute, 2004; Joint Center for Housing

Studies of Harvard University, 2011). This creates generational patterns of renting in neighborhoods where housing is affordable but opportunity low. The playing field for homeownership is not equal for people who, among other factors, do not have generational homeownership or relevant wealth accumulation (The Aspen Institute, 2004).

Current Manifestations of Structural Racism

The implications of public policy are an example of the perpetuation of structural racism. Specifically, in the context of housing for individuals with refugee and immigrant background, the allocation of resources for resettlement has not kept pace with the number of individuals who are forcibly displaced from their country of origin (Brown & Scribner, 2014; Capps et al, 2015). In Salt Lake County, this has perpetuated an overcrowded renting environment where stable and affordable housing is difficult to come by, contributing to increased transience among families with refugee and immigrant background (Downen, Perlich, Wood, & Munro, 2012).

Tenant-landlord law, influenced by federal and state-specific policy, has done little to prevent unfair treatment of low-income tenants. The Utah Fit Premise Act (passed in 1990) and Utah Code 78B-6-801 contain primary tenant-landlord laws in Utah. The Utah Fit Premise Act outlines conditions landlords and tenants need to maintain in a rental unit and includes the basic rights a tenant is entitled to with regards to maintaining a habitable home. Utah Code 78B-6-801 details the eviction process and describes when and how a landlord may forcibly detain property or enter a home, and outlines the rights tenants have with regards to disputing an eviction. That being said, these laws place an

emphasis on quickly removing uncooperative tenants and require stringent documentation guidelines. The Fair Housing Act (FHA) was introduced to quell explicit racial tension in 1968, but not necessarily to address implicit and perpetuating forms of racial discrimination. The FHA puts policies in place that protect some renters and buyers from some forms of discrimination based on tenants' reports of discrimination; however, current issues have been more dynamic, including systemic segregation and inequality in treatment towards renters (powell,² 2008). Tenant/landlord laws have "relied too heavily on complaints from victims of discrimination as the trigger for investigation and action," which has done little to prevent discrimination or unfair treatment of tenants (Turner & Rawlings, 2009, p. 11).

Research Questions

Given this is what we know to be the first documented research study into the experiences of low-income renters in Salt Lake County, Community Voices for Housing Equality's (CVHE) objective is to recognize and describe the experiences of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant backgrounds on the west side of Salt Lake County. The following research questions were developed through critical dialogues between all members of CVHE. In Salt Lake County,

- 1) How do participants describe their experiences as low-income renters?
- 2) What issues with landlords do low-income renters face when renting?
- 3) How do participants experience landlord responsiveness?
- 4) What barriers exist for renters to access their rights?

² powell intentionally left lowercase at powell's request.

These questions reflect the understanding of the issue at the start of the research project.

Methodology

Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE) is a participatory action research project composed of a team of four researchers made up of low-income renters and service providers. CVHE used a grounded theory approach to gather and analyze qualitative data. Stakeholders were involved as co-researchers in the development of questions, gathering information, analysis of findings, and action. As CVHE came to interpret the experiences of participants and researchers in this research study, the research team sought to “produce practical, pragmatic knowledge, a bricolage that is cultural and structural, judged by its degree of historical situatedness and its ability to produce praxis or action” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 93). In grounded theory research, Cannella and Lincoln (2005) urge us to consider the historical perspective in making meaning of the experiences shared by participants. Incorporating self-reflection with our practice, praxis, was important as the research team examined their own experiences and placed value on their historical position with these experiences as they inform how they interpret or read focus group participant experiences.

All CVHE team members completed Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) and are certified by the University of Utah Institutional Review Board (IRB) as co-researchers. See Appendix for approved IRB documents. The research team facilitated eight 1-hour focus groups until we reached saturation. Focus groups consisted of between 4 and 10 participants and two facilitators. Forty-eight people participated in focus groups. All participants were individuals of refugee or immigrant background.

Sixteen people did not share their country of origin, but those that did were from Argentina, Burma, Iraq, Mexico, and Somalia.

Focus groups took place in the community, from a county office boardroom to small mutual assistance offices. Four researchers facilitated focus groups, seven were audio recorded and transcribed. Notes were taken during all focus groups, recording group interactions and emerging themes from focus group conversations. The research team utilized NVivo to organize codes and transcriptions. After analyzing the focus groups, CVHE presented the findings back to community members to ensure findings reflected participant experiences. It is important to note that CVHE chose not to include landlords or owners in this research project at this time, given researchers' understanding that community members may not feel safe sharing experiences with researchers who were also speaking with landlords or owners, out of fear of retaliation, and given our basic understanding of experiences at the time. CVHE made an effort to keep the voices and experiences of tenants at the center of discussions around renting and to amplify these experiences in the dissemination of findings to the community, including targeting landlords and policy-makers as our audience. We also plan for future research to include the experiences of landlords and property owners.

As part of the research process, I kept a research journal where I recorded personal reflections throughout the research. I reflected on my personal feelings throughout the process, along with interpretations of what I heard from co-researchers and participants. This research journal helped me make sense of the stories I was hearing in the focus groups. Journaling also served as a coping mechanism for me, to help me process the new, exciting, and somewhat daunting experience of not only facilitating a

research collaboration but also building new relationships with my co-researchers.

Discussion

Community Voices for Housing Equality utilized participatory analysis and identified complex experiences and feelings many felt were related to stereotypes about them. The themes generated from this analysis are described in detail in Chapter 3. Key themes describing the experiences of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background include lack of housing options, inhibiting communication, the fine print, language barriers, barriers to accessing and understanding rights, and stereotyping. These experiences came together to inform larger analytic themes of lack of transparency, feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness, and lack of landlord accountability. The focus groups provided the space to not only share experiences but to also construct and amplify new messages related to low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background. Participants intertwined their negotiations of power into their everyday acts of survival to avoid eviction, including maintaining a very clean home, using trusted friends and family as translators, and implementing a grassroots community liaison program.

By placing low-income renters at the center of the housing discussion, CVHE uncovers existing assumptions in policy and challenges them. For example, these themes challenge assumptions that rights are accessible to all renters and that policy currently protects renters from unfair treatment. Uncovering these “circuits of injustice” (Fine, 1992) highlights spaces for change that are based on knowledge generated by community members themselves. In response to findings that highlight barriers to accessing rights,

CVHE pulled fair housing service providers together and organized a Fair Housing Expo. At this expo fair housing providers networked, engaged in dialogue about CVHE, and community residents had access to pro bono lawyers to discuss existing issues they were facing while renting. See Appendix B for the Fair Housing Expo flyer.

Summary

Community Voices for Housing Equality is an example of what happens when social workers engage in participatory action research. Not only do findings inform social work practice with landlords and renters with refugee and immigrant background, but they also provide a concrete example of how social work research can amplify the voices of those typically silenced in objective research. While CVHE is clearly place-based research, these experiences are not coincidental. These experiences and feelings are part of a larger structure of racism and systemic racism, including a complex intersectionality of race, class, and country of origin. For example, mainstream media perpetuates stereotyping that many participants felt on a personal level, such as assumptions regarding a renter's immigration status based on their race. The disproportionate rates of homeownership for people of color are tied to a larger system of housing discrimination. Participatory action research provides the space for social workers to engage in these larger discussions that move the personal to the political.

As such, it is important for social workers to engage in critical participatory action research (PAR) as a way to inform practice, research, and education, particularly in the context of immigration and resettlement. Critical PAR creates a space to understand and analyze where and how personal experiences are tied to political structures, and uses the

research space to generate action. Article 2 describes how participant experiences from Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE) relate to a larger system that maintains racism in the housing market. Article 3 describes CVHE in detail, centering the voices and experiences of individuals with refugee and immigrant backgrounds in the housing discussion. Article 4 shapes the argument as to how PAR is a foundational framework for social work.

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CHAPTER 2

RACE, POVERTY, AND HOUSING: STRUCTURES SHAPING THE EXPERIENCES OF LOW-INCOME RENTERS WITH REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT BACKGROUND

Abstract

Housing is never neutral. It is situated within complex intersections of race and poverty, unique for people who have immigrated or been resettled in the United States. Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE), a participatory action research group, examines the historical and sociopolitical structures affecting housing with populations of immigrant or refugee background. We situated the experience of low-income tenants of refugee and immigrant background within a larger picture of racial equity, segregation, and policy (The Aspen Institute, 2004; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). CVHE considers the intersectionality of race, class, and country of origin as it informs participants' everyday lived experiences as low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background. The Aspen Institute's (2004) *Structural Racism and Community Building* provided a framework to develop a structural analysis of low-income renters' experience, particularly in the context of immigration and resettlement (The Aspen Institute, 2004; Crenshaw, 1989). This framework examines the context, current manifestations, and

outcomes of structural racism (The Aspen Institute, 2004). Considerations for social work practice are discussed, along with recommendations for policy.

Introduction

Low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background navigate a complex housing experience at the intersection of race and poverty. Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE), a participatory action research (PAR) group, examines the historical and sociopolitical structures affecting housing with populations of immigrant and refugee background. The current rental market demonstrates the strain between a market-driven economy and the needs of low-income renters (Desmond, 2016; Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard, 2011). The availability of stable, maintained, and affordable housing is hindered by lack of subsidies for the development of new multifamily homes or the upkeep of aging rentals (Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard, 2011). This creates tension, as what is profitable for investors becomes a hardship for low-income renters.

CVHE intentionally uses the language of “individuals of refugee and immigrant background” as a way to signify the dynamic experience of resettlement and immigration, inclusive of individual subjectivities. It is our hope that bringing the experiences of individuals with refugee and immigrant background to the forefront of housing conversations will shift the politically singular story of low-income tenants, specifically with regards to the tenant-landlord relationship. Due to imbalances of power, low-income renters occupy some of the most vulnerable spaces, related to risks of homelessness and the negative impact of unplanned mobility (Salt Lake City

Corporation, 2013).

Background

Structural inequality, related to White ownership of land in the United States, has a deep history that has shaped the current rental market. This brief summary of history as it has contributed to the current rental market cannot fully cover the intricacies of systemic racism or national injustices that took place and continue to shape structural racism. The consequences of destructive dominance and oppression have created a homeownership rate disproportionately represented by White people and a large rental market made up of low-income communities of color (HUD, Fall, 2012).

European dominance of Native American land in the 15th century initiated a pattern of segregation and White ownership and power. This possession was characterized by genocide of millions of Native Americans as European, White settlers forcibly relocated Native Americans, declared the land their own, and their culture the center of power, all under the auspice of manifest destiny (Krenn, 2006; Nightingale, 2012). Upon taking over Native land and setting up dominant White European culture, settlers controlled immigration, albeit during an industrial boom when labor was needed. Ironically enough, those spearheading efforts to halt immigration called themselves ‘nativists,’ although many of them were newly settled themselves (Nightingale, 2012).

With the passing of Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896 segregation was formalized as separate but equal establishments (Nightingale, 2012). This was largely ineffective because physical divisions perpetuate psychological divisions, which generate assumptions that inform policies mandating the distribution of opportunity and resources

(The Aspen Institute, 2004). Together, these divisions perpetuated racism and inequality (The Aspen Institute, 2004). Southern Jim Crow laws separated neighborhoods and the divide between establishments grew into a divide between neighborhoods, formalized with policy in the south (Nightingale, 2012).

Housing discrimination, built upon segregation and unequal distributions, has included steering potential homebuyers of color away from predominately White neighborhoods, restricting purchasing power through redlining and withholding information, and showing people of color fewer homes (HUD, 2013; The Urban Institute, 2009). This discrimination has shaped current trends in homeownership based on race (The Aspen Institute, 2004). In the late 1970s, Salt Lake City was accused of “rampant redlining”, and while redlining was never proven, “investigators believed redlining was a fact” (Phillips & Autman, 1994). Going forward, investment continued to focus on the east side, contributing to the divide between east- and west-side neighborhoods in Salt Lake County (Phillips & Autman, 1994).

During a recent presentation to developers, property managers, and affordable housing advocates, the CVHE team heard from local audience members who felt redlining and discrimination were obsolete in Salt Lake City, while others in the audience argued against this, pointing out that these practices are covert. The audience’s reaction is indicative of how discrimination has become sophisticated over time and also points to the current perceptions of some power players in the housing market, namely developers and property owners. Assumptions that housing discrimination is obsolete support the national values of meritocracy, individualism, and equal opportunity, which in turn perpetuate structural racism in the housing market (Aspen Institute, 2004).

Salt Lake County is diverse with strengths and assets; however, poverty and homeownership are greatly determined by race. Neighborhoods are segregated and opportunity (defined by indicators such as school proficiency, poverty, and access to employment) is stifled (Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013). Homeownership rates also illustrate an imbalance in opportunity, as people of color are less likely to own their homes (Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013). Communities of color make up just over 25% of the county's total population, yet account for almost 44% of the poor (Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2013). Given disproportionate poverty and low homeownership rates, it comes as no surprise that the risk of homelessness and severe cost-burden are correlated with being any race other than White (Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013).

Homeownership is a major avenue for wealth and the effects of discrimination are perpetuated by policy that does not encourage investment in communities of color (The Aspen Institute, 2004; Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2011). This creates generational patterns of renting in neighborhoods where housing is affordable but opportunity low. The playing field for homeownership is not equal for people who, among other factors, do not have generational homeownership or relevant wealth accumulation (The Aspen Institute, 2004).

Community Voices for Housing Equality

Community Voices for Housing Equality, a participatory action research project, examines experiences of low-income renters with refugee or immigrant background in Salt Lake County. We are based in Salt Lake City and our research team is composed of

renters and service providers. This research team came together over the course of two years by way of one researcher's experience as a social work graduate assistant at the University Neighborhood Partners (UNP) Hartland Partnership Center. The UNP Hartland Partnership Center is a partnership between the University of Utah and west side neighborhoods in Salt Lake City. In this shared space, community residents, local nonprofits, and higher education faculty, staff, and students come together to form partnerships that build off community strengths and address community-identified needs. Social workers from the University of Utah are on site at the Hartland Partnership Center and in addition to carrying a caseload also work with community residents on an as-needed basis. Over the course of two years, UNP community leaders and local service providers came forward describing negative interactions between landlords and tenants that many felt were as a result of stereotyping individuals with immigrant and refugee backgrounds. For example, tenants described feeling taken advantage of when a landlord stereotyped them as undocumented and assumed they did not have, or know how to access, rights.

The CVHE researchers came together as a result of expressed concern regarding experiences of renters with refugee or immigrant background. The research team is made up of community residents and social workers who have lived or worked in this community for over two years, advocating for renters as they faced involuntary moves and perceived unfair landlord practices. Two of us are renters in the area and we, or our loved ones, have directly experienced these interactions. CVHE observed refugee and immigrant communities coming together to discuss housing experiences and work with each other to find solutions. We felt focus groups would be the best way to amplify

experiences to inform action. The experiences of individuals with refugee and immigrant background are unique, so we found it important to hear from different people, including Somali, Spanish, and English speakers with lengths of time in the United States ranging from 2-35 years. Our intent was to facilitate a research project that would illustrate the experiences of individuals with refugee and immigrant background to have direct practice and research implications for our community.

Using a grounded theory approach to research and analysis, the research team conducted a qualitative study, facilitating eight, 1-hour focus groups, until we reached saturation. Forty-eight people participated in the focus groups and all participants were individuals of refugee or immigrant background. Sixteen people did not share their country of origin, but those that did were from Argentina, Burma, Iraq, Mexico, and Somalia. Community Voices for Housing Equality chose not to include landlords or owners this research project at this time, given researchers' understanding that community members may fear retaliation for sharing experiences with researchers who were also speaking with landlords or owners. CVHE made an effort to keep the voices and experiences of tenants at the center of discussions around renting and to amplify these experiences in the dissemination of findings to the community, including targeting landlords and policy-makers as our audience. We also plan for future research to include the experiences of landlords and property owners.

We facilitated focus groups in diverse settings, from large county office boardrooms to 1-room mutual assistance offices. CVHE engaged in participatory content analysis, identifying codes as critical components of the experiences of tenants with refugee and immigrant background. Key themes describing the experiences of low-

income tenants with refugee and immigrant background, included lack of housing options, inhibiting communication, the fine print, language barriers, barriers to accessing and understanding rights, and stereotyping. These experiences came together to inform larger analytic themes of lack of transparency, feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness, and lack of landlord accountability. While low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background described a large power imbalance, they also described unique negotiations of power and critiques of policy that were used to inform political recommendations for social action.

There were two shifts that occurred in our analysis: moving from personal to local and from local to global. Moving our findings from personal experiences to a more shared, local experience seemed more evident to CVHE, because we know our community, the tenants, landlords, advocates, and lawyers. Moving from the local to global proved more challenging for us. The structural (i.e., location and housing) and systemic (i.e., policy and culture) forces at play that have shaped our experiences were harder to uncover and had us asking a lot of questions of situations and scenarios we had become accustomed to. These structural and cultural forces are the focus of this article. Uncovering larger systems at play in the local community led us to a discussion of structural racism.

Objective

Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE) learned from tenants who grappled with power, hopelessness, and a tenant-landlord relationship many felt was largely influenced by race. The research team witnessed issues of power and justice

threading their way through stories, informing our critical theoretical framework. We situated the experience of low-income tenants of refugee and immigrant background within a larger picture of racial equity, segregation, and policy (The Aspen Institute, 2004; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). CVHE overlaid the lens of intersectionality with the Aspen Institute's (2004) *Structural Racism and Community Building* framework to guide us through a structural analysis (The Aspen Institute, 2004; Crenshaw, 1989). This framework examines the context, current manifestations, and outcomes of structural racism (The Aspen Institute, 2004).

The Intersectionality of Race, Class, and Country of Origin

Salt Lake County is made up of diverse communities of color. The west side of Salt Lake County is the poorest region of the county and home to a large number of renters who have immigrated or been resettled (Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2013; Mai & Schmit, 2013). Considering Crenshaw's (1989, 1991) analysis of intersectionality and its impact on policy, the experience of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background draws from grounds of identity related to race, class, and country of origin. Intersectionality provides a way of thinking about multiple identities and how these intersect with power, considering how different forms of discrimination interact and overlap (Crenshaw, 1989, 2015). These identities intersect and have been pushed to the margins of fair housing policy. Considering the intersectionality of race, class, and country of origin has significant practice and political implications.

Where Crenshaw (1989) has described the filtering of Black women's experiences

through a singular lens of race or gender, so too have low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background been filtered through a singular lens of class, race, or country of origin. Policies aimed at low-income renters miss the unique experiences of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background, the unique intersection of race, country of origin, and class. For example, focusing only on the impact of class ignores discrimination based on race and the particular experiences of individuals from specific countries of origin. That being said, policy that generalizes the experience of individuals with refugee and immigrant status can lead to stereotyping, and leave out unique needs based on country of origin and class. CVHE demonstrates how the specific experience of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background, the intersectionality of race, class, and country of origin, creates a unique power imbalance between tenants and landlords and has policy implications.

Immigrant experiences, as they intersect with a low-income class in the tenant-landlord relationship, are broader than the general categories of race and country of origin defined in the Fair Housing Act. The Fair Housing Act protects against housing discrimination with regards to race and country of origin, but does not provide protection for discrimination based on the intersectionality of these two factors. For example, participants described racial discrimination against the low-income Latino population who had been stereotyped as undocumented and unable to access rights. If a landlord does not systematically discriminate against Latinos, but rather only against those perceived to be new to the U.S. or low-income, it is necessary to analyze the intersectionality of race, class, and country of origin to prove discrimination.

Political ignorance with regards to differences within groups of individuals with

immigrant and refugee background has led to a lack of protection in tenant-landlord policy, and has created tensions within immigrant and refugee communities, as predicted by Crenshaw (1989). People who have immigrated or been resettled in the United States have largely been referred to as “immigrant” or “refugee” regardless of how long they have lived in the United States or their country of origin. This clumping of identities created tensions as participants set their own needs apart. Participants talked about levels of privilege within their personal communities, where privilege is assigned to communities who have resettled legally, speak English, or have prior experience navigating a culture similar to the one reflected in policy. As Miguel put it,

That’s my case, I’m here, and I’m one of the double person. Let me see...I can speak English better than a lot of my community people and I have that gift. Then can you believe what would be the cases of other people, who know nothing about that?

This intersectionality of class, race, and country of origin has generated uneven ground for low-income renters of refugee or immigrant background.

National Values

Assumptions that inform policy are fostered based on American values of meritocracy, individualism, and equal opportunity. The structural racism perspective challenges these assumptions, taking into consideration historical context and unequal group outcomes (The Aspen Institute, 2004). In the context of low-income renters’ experiences, meritocracy, individualism, and equal opportunity are illustrated in the assumption that everyone can work harder, get better paying jobs, and find safer, more stable homes for themselves. Similarly, there is an assumption that people have, or can get, jobs that will allow them time to navigate the legal system. For communities of

color, especially with the intersection of race, country of origin, and class, the ability to gain upward mobility in employment is made more difficult given the lack of quality work and opportunity in the neighborhoods where housing is affordable. Anis shares, “In America, people say, there is... always running to and from work. We are always running to make ends meet, but we are not making enough money to meet our needs.”

CVHE focus group participants shared that accessing legal representation when dealing with tenant-landlord issues is urgent and costly, dependent on being able to afford your own and/or have an understanding or flexible boss. Pro bono lawyers are available but largely dependent on lawyer schedules. Low-income renters may be working lower paying jobs with inflexible schedules. As a result, CVHE participants did not feel they could access rights and felt powerless in the tenant-landlord relationship. While they may feel less powerful than their landlords, they do play a part in shaping the relationship and negotiations with the landlord. Sanda shared,

They [Landlords] have their own attorneys, they have their own lawyer. For me to get a lawyer is a task of a week. I need to have a holiday. I need to find people, and...they have their own lawyer.

Housing research points to the detrimental effect of forced mobility on child development, yet renters are encouraged to leave if they do not like the conditions of an apartment (Jelleyman & Spencer, 2008; Utah State Courts, 2013). Additionally, the availability of affordable housing is lacking and in Salt Lake County, and communities of color tend to have larger families, making finding affordable rentals even more difficult (Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013). This lack of availability contributes to renters’ feelings of being stuck, and the option to leave an undesirable or unfair living situation becomes a privilege for those lucky enough to find a new place to move.

Contemporary Culture

Structural racism takes into consideration current sentiment towards racial minorities, which is especially important when considering how tenant-landlord policy is dependent on a civil relationship between the tenant and landlord. Current sentiment often shows itself in the media (The Aspen Institute, 2004). In Salt Lake County, signs of racial discrimination are advertised on billboards. Consider the recent billboard advertising a dating sight called, “Where White People Meet” (McFall, 2016). When local news stations questioned the owner, they stated, “It was not racially motivated at all.” Consider the article in relation to coaches’ concerns regarding lack of response from officials when players of color were taunted with racial slurs (Phibbs, 2016). The content of these stories illustrates existing racism; however, the local paper’s lack of dissent is just as indicative of the current culture of racism, guiding its readers towards lackadaisical interpretation.

At the time of this writing, over half of U.S. governors were in support of not accepting Syrian refugees, fueling fear-based hate towards a particularly vulnerable population (Fantz & Brumfield, 2015). Information regarding the correlation between refugee status and terrorist affiliation permeated its way through American culture as fear and racism (Fantz & Brumfield, 2015). Utah Governor Herbert went against the grain and agreed to continue to accept Syrian refugees (Canham, 2016). The political statement was welcomed; however, it is very difficult to systematically remove the “bits of information” our community received from anti-Syrian media (The Aspen Institute, 2004).

CVHE participants talked about landlord assumptions about their race or

immigration status and how this informed landlord response. As Natasha said:

I find that landlords, when they hear my accent, they assume immediately that I am undocumented, that I am not educated, and that I would not go...do not know my rights. And they mistreat me and don't do the right thing.

Cahill, Quijada, and Bradley (2010) found similar evidence of this in their research with youth, critically analyzing the impact of anti-immigrant values on Salt Lake City youth. Mestizo, Arts, and Activism, a youth participatory action research group, amplified these experiences of racism and oppression, speaking to personal experiences shaped by racialized policy built on “racist, xenophobic rhetoric” (Cahill, Quijada, and Bradley, 2010).

The manifestation of current sentiment into racialized policies that limit housing options and access to rights has led to hopelessness for low-income renters with refugee or immigrant background. CVHE participants spoke about experiences where they've done all they could and eventually gave up large deposits or paid unsubstantiated fees. Moe shared,

The main thing that is happening is landlords...they think that refugees come up with cockroaches. They bring bugs and there are so many families that have been made to pay for all those things and even if they clean that carpet well and they leave it as it was when they come in, they have paid thousands of dollars.

This current feeling contributes to stereotyping, ignores unique or individual experiences, and perpetuates stigma.

Current Manifestations

Efforts have been made to eliminate the effects of structural racism; including passing the Fair Housing Act (FHA) to protect from housing discrimination and incentivizing the development of affordable housing with the Low-Income Housing Tax

Credit and HOME Investment Partnership Program (Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2015; HOME Investment Partnership Program: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2016; Low Income Housing Tax Credit: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2016). That being said, the tailings of historical racism can still be felt today and these policies are not enough to create a level playing field in housing (Aspen Institute, 2004; Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2015). Racism is maintained in current mindsets and physical divides, referred to as psychological and physical sorting (The Aspen Institute, 2004).

Racial sorting manifests itself in segregation, and psychological sorting leads to the social and cultural processes that perpetuate stereotyping (The Aspen Institute, 2004). Community mapping has produced visualizations based on characteristics of communities and enabled us to actually see the effects of physical sorting in Salt Lake County (Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2013). Racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty (RCPA/ECAP) show that not only is poverty disproportionately affecting communities of color, but also that poverty is concentrated in specific areas and segregation exists in Salt Lake County (Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2013).

Given that communities of color are disproportionately affected by poverty and make up a large portion of renters in the ECAP/RCAPs, it is clear that communities of color make up most of the low-income renter population in Salt Lake County, and are systematically confined to live in specific areas (Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2013). While full of diversity and community-generated assets, these neighborhoods are low on the HUD defined opportunity index (Salt Lake City

Corporation, 2013). The opportunity index (OI) includes school proficiency, job access, and labor market engagement, and a low OI, while not deterministic, indicates a difficult environment to take advantage of opportunities (Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013).

While some CVHE participants take pride in the community's strength, resiliency, and grassroots organizing, they recognize there are some systems fighting against them. By acknowledging these low opportunity indices, we can begin to challenge the mentality that regardless of where a person lives, equal opportunity exists.

Given the role that segregation plays in maintaining systems of oppression and limiting personal control over circumstances, many low-income renters, particularly individuals with refugee or immigrant background, find themselves stuck while simultaneously navigating this power-imbalanced relationship. Participants articulated this as feeling stuck in a powerless relationship with a landlord. Given participants are describing elements of survival in to maintain basic housing, powerlessness seemed to be amplified, yet situated alongside the necessity of survival. As Geyre put it, "Always the landlord has the power. And it's not even like normal power. It's like power above power, because the tenant has to have this [home]. It's a must for the tenant." While tenants acknowledged these feelings of powerlessness, their stories of survival highlight critical negotiations of power to avoid eviction and unplanned mobility. Palo shared, "There is the case that there is somebody in the community that will walk with you towards the management and try to translate or talk for you." In addition to going to friends for translation, participants talked about maintaining very clean homes, utilizing traditional remedies for pest control, and relying on their community for support in an effort to avoid eviction.

Segregation, or physical sorting, also contributes to the perpetuation of psychological sorting, labeling of the “other” (The Aspen Institute, 2004). “When groups do not interact, their perception of one another is less likely to be based on personal experience and more likely to be informed by hearsay, media portrayals, and cultural stereotypes” (The Aspen Institute, 2004, p. 24). Stereotyping manifests itself in the tenant-landlord relationship in many ways, such as impacting the development of affordable housing and providing justification for unfair treatment of tenants. With regards to the development of affordable housing, negative stereotypes surrounding the development of affordable housing in high-opportunity neighborhoods can hinder progress (Tighe, 2012). This is often referred to as the “Not In My Backyard” (NIMBY) opposition (Tighe, 2012).

This NIMBY opposition has a history on the west side of Salt Lake City. One racially charged community councilman’s approach to governing reflects racial stereotyping and possible effects of lack of interaction. “We’re tired of all this Spanish stuff coming in that I can’t read the names on the doors. It’s starting to look like Tijuana in my area. It’s not setting well with people” (Salt Lake Tribune, 7/29/2000). His words are dangerous and amplified by the media. Messages like this permeate the minds of people around the county. This councilman went on to make a hard push for outside investment and industry to come in to the community, ignoring community input and existing assets. This not only reflects racism in Salt Lake City, but also how racism can affect development in communities of color, especially if people of color are not in leadership or decision-making roles.

Community Voices for Housing Equality participants echoed the experience of

stereotyping as it was felt in their day-to-day interactions with landlords. They described moments when they felt stereotyped as undocumented or dirty because they had immigrated or been resettled in the community. Sanda shared, “They [landlords] don’t respond. They think the bugs and cockroaches come with the refugees.” This stereotyping is perpetuated in the media. For example, individuals of refugee status immigrate to the United States from many countries, including Muslim countries such as Iraq, Somalia, and Sudan. Rousseau, Hassan, Moreau, and Thombs (2011) point out that after the September 11 attacks, Arab Muslims’ perception of discrimination and psychological distress increased. In addition to this, current statements from governors and presidential candidates have accelerated fears and stigma. These harsh and ignorant statements have infected perceptions of low-income tenants with refugee background and contribute to a strained tenant-landlord relationship, leaving tenants of color feeling hopeless and powerless. One participant shared, “That’s the feeling you get. I mean...you know you’re right but you’re being treated wrong. You know you’re right but you can’t do anything about it.”

Racialized Public Policy and Institutional Practices

The Utah Fit Premise Act (passed in 1990) and Utah Code 78B-6-801 contain primary tenant/landlord laws in Utah. The Utah Fit Premise Act outlines conditions landlords and tenants need to maintain in a rental unit and includes the basic rights a tenant is entitled to with regards to maintaining a habitable home. Utah Code 78B-6-801 details the eviction process and describes when and how a landlord may forcibly detain property or enter a home, and outlines the rights tenants have with regards to disputing an

eviction. These policies place an emphasis on quickly removing uncooperative tenants and require stringent documentation guidelines.

Regardless of the dearth of stable and affordable housing in Salt Lake City, renters are still encouraged to “vote with their feet” while maintaining a civil relationship with their landlord (Utah State Courts, 2013). If a tenant is not satisfied with an application fee, late fees, or landlord response time, it is assumed they can move out under the terms of their lease agreement. That being said, the tenant must know how to document interactions with the landlord, in a very specific way that holds the landlord accountable and helps the tenant avoid eviction, legal fees, and tarnished credit.

The Federal Fair Housing Act (FHA) was originally introduced to quell explicit racial tension in 1968, but not necessarily to address implicit and perpetuating forms of racial discrimination. The FHA protects renters and buyers from some forms of discrimination; however, current issues have been more dynamic, including systemic segregation and inequality in treatment towards renters (powell,³ 2008). A recent Supreme Court decision found that disparate impact claims can be upheld in court under the Fair Housing Act, regardless of evidence of discriminatory intentions, and relying more on statistical evidence or other evidence (Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs v. Inclusive Communities Project, Inc., 2015). This could have significant implications in Salt Lake County, where a recent affordable development unit has been approved for construction on the west side. A local nonprofit focused on affordable housing and neighborhood revitalization has become a leader in generating conversations around the need to expand affordable housing options across the county

³ powell intentionally left lowercase at powell’s request.

(Smart, 2016).

The Fair Housing Act and Utah tenant-landlord law have long been assumed to address discrimination; however, barriers to accessing rights have contributed to lack of protection for low-income renters of refugee or immigrant background. CVHE participants have identified barriers to accessing rights as a major concern in holding landlords accountable for what they see as unfair treatment. The FHA and tenant/landlord law have “relied too heavily on complaints from victims of discrimination as the trigger for investigation and action” (Turner & Rawlings, 2009, p. 11). Documenting and proving wrongdoing is difficult. Policies require available and sometimes costly legal services to prove wrongdoing, due in part to the fact that landlords are not required to participate in mediation, a more accessible and cost-effective form of dispute resolution.

Arthur illustrates,

That’s not only a matter of language, but it’s a matter of how long you can involve in a case like this...I have gone to my case worker, we’ve been to IRC, then we’ve been to DLC, then I just got off the phone with the labor union. So, by the time, will I be able to continue to battle with him or keep doing that? No one would, I believe, because we have work. I have two babies.

With a high proportion of renters in Salt Lake County severely cost-burdened, relying on the outcome of a time-intensive court battle is not an option (Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013). The risk of losing an eviction court case may outweigh the possible benefit of winning. This does little to prevent discrimination or unfair treatment of tenants, and places a heavy burden on the work of nonprofits to meet the needs of low-income renters. It will be interesting to see if the new Supreme Court plays a role in preventing housing discrimination by expanding the location of affordable options.

In addition to the Fair Housing Act and Utah tenant-landlord law, policy regulates

the distribution of resources for refugee resettlement, rental assistance, and neighborhood investment. The lack of funding in these areas is felt in the everyday experiences of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background. The number of individuals of refugee and immigrant background is growing, but the allocation of resources is not keeping up (Brown & Scribner, 2014; Capps et al, 2015).

When individuals with refugee status are initially resettled in Salt Lake County, some do not have an option on where they can live and oftentimes, agencies choose apartments based primarily on affordability rather than habitability. Affordability relies heavily on resources allocated to refugee resettlement. Given the scarcity of affordable units in Salt Lake County, resettlement agencies' options are limited. Anis points out,

When I signed the year lease, I went back to the home and I looked around the house was a mess. Everywhere broken, a lot of things were broken. And I talked to the case manager about the issue and they said, 'We could not find another apartment for you. This is all we could find.' And I was forced to live in that apartment in that condition. And my lease ended a year, and I was forced to sign another year because I cannot afford to move out...

In addition to the lack of funding towards refugee resettlement, housing assistance is also losing ground. Housing assistance is not an entitlement, which has led to an increase in eligible families who do not receive housing assistance (Desmond, 2015; The Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2015). Only 1 in 4 households who are eligible for assistance receive this (The Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2015). Many participants talked about being on long waiting lists for section 8 housing vouchers in Utah and it preventing them from leaving precarious housing situations. As Kern shared, with regards to a neighbor who was experiencing unsubstantiated water usage charges, "I told the lady, 'Can you move out of that apartment?' 'No, it will take me longer [to receive] section 8 housing' So I am like,

helpless.” Housing assistance could increase housing options and prevent unplanned mobility, but the allocation of funding is not enough.

Policy has also perpetuated a lack of investment in affordable housing (The Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2015). Communities living together supports strong social networks, which are important for new communities of refugee and immigrant background (Hynie, Crooks, & Barragn, 2011), but political strategies to physically sort people by their race or ethnicity limits housing choices and creates divided communities with unequal opportunity (The Aspen Institute, 2004). Lack of housing subsidies limits the development of affordable housing in diverse markets, or communities that might typically have a higher home value (The Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2015). In addition to this, lack of development of affordable housing simply limits options. As a result of lack of investment in development and upkeep of affordable housing, the stock of affordable rentals in Salt Lake City are getting older and neglected, but they are in high demand (Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013).

Here, the rental market, at the intersection of property investment and rental needs, illustrates the tensions between a capitalist, market-driven economy and the realities of low-income tenants. A booming rental market is good for investors, but not low-income renters (primarily people of color) who find their options limited and vacancy rates low (Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2015). The west side of Salt Lake, for example, historically seen as a risky investment, has lacked new building, but Salt Lake County is currently promoting this area as a good market for investors. Demand is high, and with it, rent. As a result, rents jumped almost 5% in Salt

Lake County in March 2015, but this message does not bode well for immigrant or refugee communities looking for housing options that are affordable (Semerad, 2015).

Discussion

The intersectionality of race, class, and country of origin, along with historical context and current manifestations of structural racism, contribute to current experiences within the tenant-landlord relationship for low-income renters of immigrant or refugee background. Policy and practice produce racialized outcomes that manifest themselves in current power discrepancies. The racial power discrepancy between low-income tenants with refugee or immigrant background and White tenants is perpetuated from a national, nativist history of White ownership and housing discrimination (The Aspen Institute, 2004; Nightingale, 2012). Navigating the renter system requires necessary acquisition of the dominant language along with the ability to read and comprehend complicated lease agreements as well as familiarity with the current rental system. These nativist attitudes surface from early posturing of settlers enforcing anti-immigration laws (Nightingale, 2012).

Lack of English literacy or knowledge of lease agreements reduces ability to exercise power and liberty. Alan shared,

We are refugees. We are lucky to be here...it's a miracle to be here in the United States. We are refugees from the refugee camp and we do not know the rules, regulations, policies. What we have been told is this is a country of 100% liberty, but where is the liberty?

The intricacies written into a rental agreement make it very difficult for a diverse audience to comprehend, especially when contracts are signed immediately upon arrival in the United States, in the middle of the night, after days of international travel. As

Ugyen recounts, “The first thing is, the number of papers they make the refugees sign... If they arrive at midnight they cannot live in the apartment until they have signed the lease.” This experience describes the great pressure and quick transfer of power when signing long-term binding contracts.

Participants felt powerless in the slew of conditions necessary to communicate with their landlord. One-way communication, where tenants of refugee or immigrant background find landlords have the ability to post notices on their doors and charge fees without warning, provides little to no opportunity to dispute charges. Geyre pointed out, “If there was clear communication between the landlords and tenants, they could have negotiated, but there is no communication. You either pay it, or you don’t and you’re in trouble.” The tenant is assumed to know the process to hold the landlord accountable, by refuting charges in writing or finding a time when the landlord is available to discuss.

Understanding the process of holding the landlord accountable is one thing, but some tenants are afraid to attempt communication with landlords out of fear of retaliation. Miguel shared,

For undocumented person to be threatened that first you’re going to jail and then you’re going to be deported home? Your family lives here! You will never see your family. You know? It’s life you’re talking about. And you know...you think a lot. You think twice before you say, you know? You take everything.

This fear of deportation or homelessness paralyzes tenants’ efforts to challenge decisions. The intersectionality of race, country of origin, and class come into play as refugee and immigrant communities not only navigate intricacies of segregation and perpetuation of low-paying jobs, but also stereotyping, making balanced communication dependent on a landlord’s perception of them.

The national value of meritocracy perpetuates an assumption that not accessing

rights is simply tied to lack of effort. This is illustrated in the number of trainings offered to educate tenants on their rights, but knowing rights is only one element of increasing access to them. As Hosni shared,

People say, “Yeah, if it sounds unfair you just go to the court.” I mean, it sounds so easy you know? And even though we respect the court... we know how difficult it is to go through the process...so it could be very frustrating. I mean...you don’t want to go to the court for a \$50 refund, you know?

Many tenants are unable to access rights because it seems too costly or demands too much time away from jobs with inflexible schedules.

Participants talked about feeling stuck in current housing situations, due, in part, to lack of housing options. A tenant could be at risk of losing basic shelter needs if they are evicted. Nativist prejudice, communication barriers, assumptions of meritocracy, and feeling stuck as a result of lack of affordable housing options are elements of the current manifestations of structural racism in the rental market. Policy largely ignores these realities of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background and perpetuates conditions of oppression, characterized by lack of choice, and, as one participant stated, liberty.

Risk of Homelessness

Risk of homelessness, equivalent to spending 50% or more of your income on housing, is correlated with poverty and minority status in Salt Lake County (Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013). Risk of homelessness may be mitigated with rental assistance, but the majority of low-cost rentals are not given rental assistance, and the housing stock is getting older and more expensive to maintain (Desmond, 2015; Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2011). As a result, low-income renters tend to

live in neglected but affordable rentals. This contributes to precarious and unstable housing, putting renters at increased risk for involuntary moves.

Structural racism has hindered the development of affordable housing, which has impacted low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background, who tend to have larger families. A history of White ownership and control of land is maintained by capitalist policy that prioritizes profit, even if systematically exploiting communities. It is no surprise that in 2008, when the availability of affordable housing fell, individuals with refugee and immigrant status were among the worst hit (Sullivan and Power, 2013). The demand for affordable housing has increased, spurred by a decrease in employment with livable wage (Sullivan & Power, 2013). In addition to the connection between homelessness, access to affordable housing, and lower incomes for individuals with refugee and immigrant background, family size comes into the mix as newcomers attempt to care for typically larger families with a smaller income (Hiebert, Mendez, & Wyly, 2008; Sherrell, D'Addario, and Hiebert, 2007). Larger families require paying higher rent or subjecting the family to precarious, crowded living conditions, especially in Salt Lake County, where there is a deficit in large family rentals (National Secretariat on Homelessness, 2005).

Unplanned Mobility

Unplanned mobility, forcibly moving from one place to another, is a common experience related to housing instability and risk of homelessness. It can cause damaging effects to communities and children by disturbing valuable social networks that link community members to resources and support (Clark, 2010, p. 6). For individuals of

refugee and immigrant background, these social networks are crucial, especially for people new to the United States. These networks contribute to a flow of information regarding navigating a new community, accessing resources, and providing valuable psychosocial support (Dominguez, 2010; Hynie, Crooks, & Barragan, 2011).

Mobility affects communities as a whole, but the impact is most evident in children's wellbeing (Jelleyman & Spencer, 2008). The effect of mobility on children's education and physical/mental health development is densely researched in housing studies (Clark, 2010; Cohen & Wardrip, 2011; Jelleyman & Spencer, 2008). Mobility may decrease academic performance. The more children move, the harder it is to overcome negative educational outcomes and achievement, even if the student stays at the same school. This effect of mobility may be tied to stability in the home (i.e., the child cannot find a quiet place to study) or disruption in the child's school atmosphere (i.e., the child has lost positive social networks or academic resources) (Cohen & Wardrip, 2011).

With regards to physical and mental health outcomes, increased mobility, especially unplanned, can result in a disruption in access to health care (Cohen and Wardrip, 2011). It may lead to an increase in risk-taking behavior (Jelleyman & Spencer, 2008). When working with communities and decision-makers in creating sustainable solutions to decrease homelessness or eviction, referencing mobility and its damaging effects can underscore the sense of urgency and inform policy with experiences of underrepresented communities and children.

Conclusion

Amplifying the experiences of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant backgrounds brings to light many gaps and assumptions in tenant-landlord policy. As CVHE began to analyze personal and local experiences of low-income renters from a structural perspective, structural racism emerged as systematically maintaining discrimination and oppression in the rental market. The intersection of race, class, and country of origin has been largely ignored in policy, filtered through narrowing generalizations that inform policy and fail to represent the diverse and unique experiences of individuals with refugee or immigrant experience. This has significant implications for social work practice and research. Social work practice implications include increasing advocacy with and amplification of voices of tenants with refugee and immigrant background.

Social workers can approach practice with the lens of intersectionality. Understanding intersectionality creates an opportunity to talk about how multiple identities, in this case race, class, and country of origin, come together in discrimination. Social workers who incorporate intersectionality into their everyday practice with individuals, families, and community see everyday experiences as more complex and initiate questions and practice approaches that are more inclusive of unique and diverse experiences. Approaching social work practice with a lens of intersectionality gives social workers a tool to question assumptions regarding how people are able to access resources and their rights, and negotiate power imbalances. It also creates opportunities for social workers to critique existing policies and highlight gaps in policy that manifest themselves in the lives of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background.

Existing negotiations of power and critiques of policy can inform a political response to the needs of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background. Political changes can include an increase in allocation of funding towards affordable housing development and refugee resettlement services. Desmond (2015) points out, “When Milwaukee tenants facing eviction were given access to emergency housing aid from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the city’s formal eviction rate fell by 15 percent.” Emergency housing aid could be one solution, while aid towards sustainable and community-led initiatives targeting the specific needs of individuals with refugee and immigrant background could increase community stability and maintain valuable social networks.

Political initiatives could also include formalizing some of the existing negotiations of power shared by CVHE participants, including the incorporation of translation services, developing a community liaison position between tenants and landlords, and mandating mediation when issues arise. Along this same line, housing advocates need to ramp up efforts to increase access to legal rights, as accessing rights was a major concern for CVHE participants. Community Voices for Housing Equality participant experiences highlight how policy impacts the everyday lived experiences of individuals with refugee and immigrant background. While advocating and providing support for individuals and families is very important, it is also very important to maintain a critical eye on policy and engage in macro-level change efforts aimed at preventing an increase in risk of homelessness and unplanned mobility of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background.

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CHAPTER 3

THERE IS AN “ISBAARO”: ROADBLOCKS IN THE EXPERIENCES OF LOW-INCOME TENANTS WITH REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT BACKGROUND

Abstract

Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE) is a participatory action research (PAR) group dedicated to examining the experiences of low-income renters with refugee or immigrant backgrounds. This research focuses on amplifying these voices and experiences at the center of the housing discussion. CVHE is based in Salt Lake City and our research team grew out of one researcher’s experience as a graduate assistant and social worker at University Neighborhood Partners (UNP) Hartland Partnership Center, a community-campus partnership center aimed at building the capacity of local residents. Our research team is composed of four people who are renters and/or social workers in the community. Community Voices for Housing Equality uncovers tenants’ personal and shared experiences of stereotyping and repeats the need to provide equitable access to rights. CVHE also reveals the systemic barriers that people with refugee and immigrant backgrounds may face in maintaining stability as renters, including patterns of communication and fine print. Participants described feelings of hopelessness and

powerlessness both as a result of their experiences and as having a paralyzing effect on holding landlords accountable. Community Voices for Housing Equality responded by organizing a fair housing expo that increased access to a pro bono law clinic with translators on site so low-income tenants with varying backgrounds could ask questions and take steps towards exercising their rights. See Appendix B for the Fair Housing Expo flyer. This article concludes with community-generated recommendations for improving tenant-landlord policy and social work practice and offers considerations for further research.

Introduction

Renters and landlords navigate a relationship moderated by contracts, policy, and systems, with critical outcomes that can increase forced mobility in a community. Sustainable, affordable housing is a major contributor to secure neighborhoods and opportunities to improve quality of life (Evans, 2004). For example, stable housing benefits the next generation: if their family has more control over if and when they move, children may have better educational and health outcomes (Cohen & Wardrip, 2011). That being said, children living in families with low incomes are more likely to experience forced mobility and are more likely to experience negative educational or mental health outcomes (Wood, Halfon, Scarlata, Newacheck, & Nessim, 1993).

The history surrounding homeownership and segregation is complex and illustrates how race and housing intersect, manifesting in the disproportionate number of renters who are African American, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, or Native/Alaska Native (HUD, Fall 2012). Within this historical context, people who have recently

immigrated or resettled to the United States may have a renting experience compounded with language barriers and becoming familiar with new systems in order to take advantage of opportunities (Capps et al, 2015). Given the impact and complexities of renting, Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE), a participatory action research (PAR) group, has examined the experiences of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background.

Within the tenets of PAR, our research team sought to unearth circuits of injustice and amplify the voices of individuals with refugee and immigrant background to inform social justice action. We are based in Salt Lake City and our research team is composed of renters and social workers. This article describes the structural context of the current rental market, description of the current low-income renter, overview of policy, description of CVHE and findings, with recommendations and considerations for further research.

Participatory Action Research

Participatory action research (PAR) is an approach to research that practices development of knowledge as an “exercise of informed citizenry” (Appadurai, 2006, p. 168). With foundations in liberationist perspectives, PAR engages people who are affected by urgent social issues as co-researchers (Cahill, 2007; Freire, 1992; Fals Borda, 2012; Reason & Bradbury, 2001b). Co-researchers come together to “engage social justice issues” and in this process develop and take action utilizing community-identified change strategies (Johnston-Goodstar, 2013, p. 318).

Participatory action research is particularly appropriate for social workers to

examine the tenant-landlord experience, considering the systemic context and silencing of low-income renters with refugee or immigrant backgrounds in policy. PAR provided a space to bring the voices and experiences of renters to the forefront of the housing conversation and take action. The CVHE team takes ownership of the research outcomes and the process was shared as outside researchers and community members collaborated to develop place-based knowledge created within Salt Lake City, to facilitate change in our community.

Community Voices for Housing Equality emerged from the lived experiences of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant backgrounds. Many residents of refugee or immigrant background felt targeted and misrepresented by landlords and did not feel they could rely on or access the rights they have as low-income tenants, such as fair treatment maintaining habitability. The experiences and voices of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background have largely been silenced in current tenant-landlord policy, and this PAR project provides an opportunity challenge dominant political discourse that has filled this void. The CVHE research team (described in detail below) utilized a PAR approach to shift the discourse away from changing the community to adapt to an oppressive system and towards changing a system that has perpetuated unfair or oppressive treatment of tenants with refugee and immigrant background with limited access to rights and policy that does little to prevent discrimination.

The Overlap of Two Worlds

The rental market encompasses the overlap of two worlds: capitalism and affordability. The construction and renovation of affordable homes can be costly and the incentive to invest in this kind of stabilization process requires reliance on tax credits and multiple fluctuating subsidies (Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2015). That being said, lack of investment in development and upkeep of affordable housing contributes to a stock of affordable rentals that are getting older and neglected, but still in high demand (Lowentheil & Weller, 1995; Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013). The lack of stable housing is compounded by the fact that the majority of renters who are eligible for rental assistance are not receiving it while the housing stock grows older and more expensive to maintain, limiting stable housing choices for low-income renters (Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2011).

Individuals with refugee and immigrant background care for typically larger families with a smaller income (Hiebert, Mendez, & Wyly, 2008; Sherrell, D'Addario, and Hiebert, 2007). This requires larger families to pay higher rent and places the family at risk of living in precarious and crowded living conditions, especially in Salt Lake County, where there is a deficit in large family rentals (National Secretariat on Homelessness, 2005; Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013). For individuals who have recently immigrated or been resettled, along with availability of affordable rentals is the added weight of immigration laws, resettlement processes, and current cultural sentiment towards communities of immigrant and refugee background.

For families who have been uprooted from their homes, making a home has significant meaning, incorporating the physical space with making meaning of complex

migration experiences along the way (Freund, 2015). Making a home includes personal perceptions and experiences as well as a collective community process of creating home in a new community (Freund, 2015). The meaning of home might be influenced by the conditions surrounding immigration and resettlement, shaping an individual's perception of home as having a range of meaning from home as a place filled with hope and opportunity to a desire to repatriate and return to the country of origin (Trapp, 2015).

Brun (2015) describes home as a “material base for creating agency” for people with immigrant and refugee background. While a home creates that physical space to create agency, it also contributes to strong social networks within refugee and immigrant communities. For individuals of refugee and immigrant background, these social networks are crucial, especially for people new to the United States. These networks contribute to a flow of information regarding navigating a new community, accessing resources, and providing valuable psychosocial support (Dominguez, 2010; Hynie, Crooks, & Barragan, 2011).

These informal social networks are critical, as most policies and practices around the tenant-landlord relationship in Utah are vague when it comes to the everyday tenant-landlord relationship. They rely heavily on the tenant and landlord to reasonably negotiate, to come to mutual agreements on their own. In considering the impact of structural racism and negative national sentiment regarding immigration and resettlement, a low-income tenant with refugee and immigrant background simply cannot rely on a landlord to be responsive. When mediation and negotiation are lacking between a tenant and landlord, friction develops between the tenant and landlord that can lead to eviction and, overtime, increased forced mobility for families with refugee and immigrant

background.

As social workers and service providers, we do our best to supply sensitizing information to both tenants and landlords. For example, at University Neighborhood Partners (UNP) Hartland Partnership Center in Salt Lake City, social workers provide residents with information about their rights, link them up to mediation services, and translate or interpret communication with landlords. Social workers also work with property managers to sensitize them to the unique needs of residents and effective methods of communication. This information is not enough. Tenants with low incomes are frequently tested when confronted with issues in their home (i.e., bed bugs, plumbing, or fixture problems). For example, if a landlord is unresponsive to a tenant's needs, the tenant has to understand their rights under the Utah Fit Premise Act and how to effectively communicate in writing to hold the landlord accountable. The stakes are high for families with low incomes, as moves for poor families are often forced (i.e., eviction) and often followed by a move into increasingly unstable housing (Desmond, 2015). When renters are cost-burdened, the risk of homelessness and mobility goes up (Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013).

The Experiences of Low-Income Renters

The experiences of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background are situated in a larger housing discussion shaped by a history of racial discrimination. The disparity between White homeowners and homeowners of color is longstanding, due in part to systemic racism manifested in redlining and steering techniques (The Aspen Institute, 2004; HUD, Fall 2012). More specifically, "recent homeownership rates show

that 73.5 percent of homeowners are white, while African-American and Hispanic homeownership rates remain below 50 percent” (HUD, Fall 2012, para. 4). Salt Lake County in particular has a history with redlining. In the late 1970s, Salt Lake City was accused of redlining the west side. Redlining was never proven, however residents and political leaders at the time feel strongly this was common practices and shaped the landscape of housing today (Phillips & Autman, 1994).

In the U.S., there are around 40,218,000 renter-occupied units (United States Census Bureau, 2013) with 28% of these units occupied by households living below the poverty line. In Salt Lake County, people of color make up just over 25% of the total population, but account for almost 44% of the poor population (Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2013). The Fair Housing Equity Assessment (FHEA) highlights the location of racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty (RCAP/ECAP), characterized by high concentrations of poor and renting households of color (Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2013).

Community Voices for Housing Equality focused attention on the west side of the county, given the location of these RCAP/ECAP. Currently, there are an estimated 45,000 people resettled in Utah, representing over 20 countries of origin, with west side neighborhoods home to the majority of individuals with refugee and immigrant background (Mai & Schmit, 2013; Utah Department of Workforce Services: Office of Refugee Services, 2015). Resources for resettlement have not kept pace with the number of individuals who are forcibly displaced from their country of origin (Brown & Scribner, 2014; Capps et al, 2015). This has created a strained affordable rental market where stable and affordable housing is difficult to come by and the population is increasingly

transient (Downen, Perlich, Wood, & Munro, 2012).

Unplanned mobility, related to heavy cost-burdens of living in unstable housing, is fairly common with low-income households and poses a risk to children, particularly in education and physical/mental health (Cohen & Wardrip, 2011; Jelleyman & Spencer, 2008). This kind of mobility affects families and communities, disturbing valuable social networks linking community members to resources and support (Clark, 2010, p. 6). Home and social networks are particularly valuable to individuals with refugee and immigrant backgrounds, however a gap in research exists with regards to understanding the complexities surrounding the experiences of tenants with refugee and immigrant backgrounds.

Current Policy

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Fair Housing Act) is critical in protecting tenants from discrimination, but discrimination is dynamic and includes segregation and inequality in treatment, which are difficult to prove (powell,⁴ 2008). People who experience unfair treatment not specifically addressed in the Fair Housing Act (such as language barriers or stereotyping) will not find protection (Turner & Rawlings, 2009). Until recently, the Fair Housing Act did little to prevent discrimination. A recent court decision (Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs v. Inclusive Communities Project, Inc., 2015) determined that disparate impact, regardless of intentions, could be upheld in court under the Fair Housing Act. This has important implications for the development of affordable housing in areas that have more

⁴ powell intentionally left lowercase at powell's request.

opportunities for upward mobility that have been historically dominated by a mostly white population. This also shifts the burden of proof of discrimination from a plaintiff trying to prove discriminatory intentions to the defendant proving there were no other reasonable business moves that would decrease disparate impact. Salt Lake County has recently approved a multifamily affordable housing development on the west side that local housing advocates have pushed back on, asking for more housing options across the county as opposed to consistently placing them on the west side.

Along with the Fair Housing Act, tenant-landlord law, influenced by federal and state-specific policy, has done little to prevent unfair treatment of low-income tenants. The Utah Fit Premise Act (passed in 1990) and Utah Code 78B-6-801 contain primary tenant-landlord laws in Utah. The Utah Fit Premise Act outlines conditions landlords and tenants need to maintain in a rental unit and includes the basic rights a tenant is entitled to with regards to maintaining a habitable home. Utah Code 78B-6-801 details the eviction process and describes when and how a landlord may forcibly detain property or enter a home, outlining the process for tenants to dispute an eviction. These laws place an emphasis on quickly removing uncooperative tenants and require stringent documentation guidelines (see Utah Code 57-17 and 57-22 for example). In Salt Lake County, renters are encouraged to “vote with their feet” and maintain a civil relationship with their landlord (Utah State Courts, <https://youtu.be/jdLUXU-Krhs>), regardless of the lack of housing options and tense interactions between tenants and landlords.

If a tenant is not satisfied with an application or late fee (both of which have no limit) or a landlord’s response time, these policies perpetuate an assumption that a tenant has options that they can choose to move in to instead. That being said, the tenant must

know how to document interactions with the landlord in a very specific way that holds the landlord accountable and helps the tenant avoid eviction, legal fees, and tarnished credit. These policies rely on a civil tenant-landlord relationship and assumptions that a tenant has choices in affordable rentals. Current tenant-landlord law and the Fair Housing Act have “relied too heavily on complaints from victims of discrimination as the trigger for investigation and action” (Turner & Rawlings, 2009, p. 11). This does little to prevent discrimination or unfair treatment and places a heavy burden on non-profits to advocate for low-income renters. The voices of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background have been stifled for too long. There is urgency from the community to change these policies so tenants with refugee and immigrant background can maintain stability in their homes.

Community Voices for Housing Equality

To our knowledge, this is the first documented research study into the experiences of low-income renters in Salt Lake County, consequently, CVHE’s initial objective was to recognize and describe the experiences of low-income renters with refugee or immigrant background on the west side of Salt Lake County. The following research questions were developed through critical dialogue between all members of CVHE. In Salt Lake County,

- 1) How do participants describe their experiences as low-income renters?
- 2) What issues with landlords do low-income renters face when renting?
- 3) How do participants experience landlord responsiveness?
- 4) What barriers exist for renters to access their rights?

5) What is Salt Lake County doing to make housing fair?

These questions reflect the understanding of the issue at the start of the research project.

Relationships were built with a wide variety of community partners, by way of one researcher's position with University Neighborhood Partners (UNP) Hartland Partnership Center for over two years. For the purpose of this paper, the initiating researcher will be referred to as the Principal Investigator (PI). The described PAR project is part of the UNP research activities. UNP is "a university-community outreach partnership center and department of the University of Utah...focused on building long-term collaborations between university departments, state and local government, nonprofits, and service systems of all kinds" (Hunter & Mileski, 2013, p. 615). The UNP Hartland Partnership Center, located on the west side of Salt Lake City, is a space where community-university partnerships come together in reciprocal learning and action to build community capacity by offering various services to residents. The UNP Hartland Partnership Center has social worker on site who provide one-on-one case management services to community residents with diverse needs. Given that Utah has resettled an estimated 45,000 refugees since 1988, and the majority of those resettled or immigrated with refugee background live on the west side, many of the residents who visit Hartland are of refugee or immigrant background.

The Hartland Resident Committee is a board made up of members of new arriving communities that serve as representatives to the broader community and liaisons to the Hartland Partnership center. The Resident Committee leads growth at Hartland and began to witness emerging problems between tenants and landlords in the refugee and immigrant community. One Resident Committee member stated, "People are scared,"

and this fear runs deep, from fear of eviction to landlord retaliation (personal communication, December 11, 2013). Local nonprofits that focus on housing advocacy for low-income tenants became increasingly aware of negative interactions between landlords and tenants. It was difficult to comprehend the characteristics of experience without bringing voices together and understanding impact on residents. Community Voices for Housing Equality sought to do just this, to guide research, practice, and policy decisions.

Prior to coming together as CVHE for the first time in 2013, the UNP Hartland Partnership Center was approached by the director of a well-respected neighborhood nonprofit, who expressed a sense of urgency to understand and respond to what many perceived to be a growing crisis within the local community. This was our catalyst. One researcher engaged in informal interviews with community residents and service providers to determine a starting point for the PAR project. Our first meeting was October 30, 2013. Community residents and service providers came together to form CVHE.

Community Voices for Housing Equality is made up of four core members. All of us have lived or worked in this community, advocating for renters as they faced involuntary moves and perceived unfair landlord practices. Two of us are not renters ourselves and work as social workers in the community. Two of us are social workers and renters in the area and we, or our loved ones, have directly experienced these interactions. In addition to developing our team, we have partnered with the Disability Law Center, NeighborWorks Salt Lake, and Utah Housing Coalition in an effort to implement community-identified action items.

Methodology

Community Voices for Housing Equality applied grounded theory to gathering and analyzing our data. Grounded theory brings analysis and data collection together as one cyclical process, is appropriate when seeking to understand a specific experience, and is particularly relevant for CVHE (Charmaz, 2006). Methods, described in detail below, included focus groups and a brief questionnaire. An analysis of the data began early in the process as researchers studied and compared initial data. From here, codes were developed and memos written describing emerging researcher insights. As codes and analytic categories emerged, researchers integrated questions into future focus group guides, to confirm and expand on substantive theories (Charmaz, 2006).

As the research team came to interpret the experiences of participants and researchers, we sought to walk away with knowledge that could be applied to policy and practice in working with low-income renters, while understanding unique systemic, historic, and cultural elements (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Utilizing all of this information to develop our understanding generated a bricolage that allowed our team to understand how the experiences of renters with refugee and immigrant background are situated within a larger housing context (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Cannella and Lincoln (2005) urge us to consider the historical perspective in making meaning of the experiences shared by participants. This is where the experiences of members of the research team came into play with analysis. Praxis played an important role as the research team examined their own experiences and placed value on their historical positions to inform their interpretation of findings.

The research team facilitated eight, 1-hour focus groups until we reached

saturation. Focus groups consisted of between 4 and 10 participants and two facilitators. While four participants is a small number for a focus group, this occurred on one occasion because community residents felt most comfortable sharing in a small group setting. Forty-eight people participated in focus groups. All participants were individuals of refugee or immigrant background. Sixteen people did not share their country of origin, but those that did were from Argentina, Burma, Iraq, Mexico, and Somalia. It is important to note that CVHE chose not to include landlords or owners in this research project at this time, given researchers' understanding that community members may not feel safe sharing experiences with researchers who were also speaking with landlords or owners, out of fear of retaliation, and given our basic understanding of experiences at the time. CVHE made an effort to keep the voices and experiences of tenants at the center of discussions around renting and amplify these experiences in the dissemination of findings to the community, including targeting landlords and policy-makers as our audience. We also plan for future research to include the experiences of landlords and property owners.

All CVHE team members completed Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) and are certified by the University of Utah Institutional Review Board (IRB) as co-researchers. See Appendix A for approved IRB documents. Focus groups took place in the community, from a county office boardroom to small mutual assistance offices. CVHE co-researchers facilitated focus groups, seven were audio recorded and transcribed. Notes were taken during all focus groups, recording group interactions and emerging themes. The team engaged in participatory analysis, described in detail below, and utilized NVivo for coding and organization of findings. After analyzing the focus groups, CVHE presented the findings back to community members to ensure findings

reflected participant experiences.

In spring 2014 the CVHE team facilitated the first three focus groups in English, examining low-income renters' experiences in Salt Lake City. In line with tenets of grounded theory, we developed initial focus group guides based on our "points of departure" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 17). These points of departure were determined from researcher first-hand experiences and observations in the community and included examining landlord responsiveness and tenants' feelings of control. After coding and analyzing data from initial focus groups, we learned money, language barriers, landlord accountability, and general methods of communication were the most common issues renters were facing with their landlord. Low-income renters, as described above, tend to live in RCAP/ECAPs; therefore, we targeted our recruitment efforts to these areas through snowball sampling.

Initial focus group findings informed theoretical sampling as participants revealed that individuals new to the United States with low-paying jobs had unique experiences related to their refugee or immigrant status. Identifying the unique experiences of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background became a critical move for the research team. We adapted data gathering strategies, focusing on low-income renters living in Salt Lake County with refugee and immigrant background who were English, Somali, and Spanish speakers. Focusing on this population expanded our process to incorporate Critical Race Theory and the Aspen Institutes (2004) structural racism framework into our analysis.

CVHE engaged in a participatory analysis process that brought different positionalities of the team to inform our understanding of the data. Focus groups that

were facilitated in Somali or Spanish were translated and transcribed with co-researchers. The PI engaged in line-by-line coding and initial coding of focus groups utilizing NVivo. Following PI facilitated training workshops on content analysis and coding, all researchers were given segments of the same focus group to conduct line-by-line coding. Upon completion of line-by-line coding, the team came back together to discuss the emergence of larger themes. The research team used themes gathered from line-by-line coding and applied it to segments of focus group transcriptions. First, the team collaboratively coded a portion of a focus group by projecting the document on a screen and speaking directly to the document. Then, team members transcribed portions individually. From this process new themes emerged and current themes clarified to more accurately reflect the experiences of low-income renters.

The team came together to engage in theoretical coding to determine how themes related to each other and described the experience of low-income renters. This was an important moment in the participatory analysis as the research team engaged in critical dialogue regarding experiences emerging from focus group findings and what this meant for the community. The PI presented a framework from the Aspen Institute's (2004) *Structural Racism and Community Building*. This framework describes the context, current manifestations, and outcomes of structural racism. After reviewing this framework, the CVHE engaged in dialogue that began with the questions, "What are you hearing? Do you think this relates to what we are hearing in the focus groups?"

Researchers who were currently low-income renters in the community offered a perspective and explanation unparalleled to any outside researcher's ability. As we talked about racism in the media and gaps in policy, one researcher, while skimming

through a transcription, shared with the team, “That is how I feel right now. When I read this...it hits me.” It seemed impossible for the research team to not talk about how experiences related to their everyday lives. As the research team reached a critical level of trust, the participatory analysis process paralleled a social work group process that enabled everyone to speak openly about personal feelings and issues of power.

Researchers who were not low-income renters spoke openly about advocating and feelings of guilt surrounding privilege and opportunity of homeownership.

Beyond guilt came mutual meaning-making, when the research team worked together to develop our shared meaning of the research process and findings and validated each other’s processes. We recognized how sharing perspectives could inform future research and action. For example, being a homeowner brought the perspective of the risks associated with being a landlord, heightening our awareness that future research needs to include the experiences of landlords and property owners. It also led us to an understanding that bringing tenants and landlords together to inform future action items could have benefits for low-income tenants and landlords. Continually having personal experiences at the table kept us focused on the urgency of this issue in the community.

Critical Race Theory

Grounded theory typically requires beginning research without facilitating a thorough literature review, to prevent inserting assumptions into interpretation of findings. As research moves along, however, existing theories may find a place in the analysis of gathered data. In analyzing the first three focus groups, Critical Race Theory (CRT) emerged as a guide to understanding tenants’ experiences.

Critical race theorists study and transform “the relationship among race, racism, and power” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 3). Critical Race Theory and PAR have come together to inform a present understanding of PAR as an approach to research that “expands notions of expert knowledge; recognizes that individuals have multiple, overlapping, potentially conflicting identities, loyalties and allegiances; complicates identity categories; and makes the political nature of knowledge production explicit” (111-112, 2009). CRT brings intersectionality into the analysis, which CVHE has found critical to consider when analyzing participants’ experiences with stereotyping and diversity of experiences within groups of individuals who have immigrated or been resettled. Intersectionality is a way of thinking about how multiple identities overlap in as forms of discrimination and interact with power (Crenshaw, 1989). With the experiences of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background, identities related to class, race, and country of origin overlap as forms of oppression.

Participants grappled with hopelessness and a tenant-landlord relationship many felt was largely influenced by structural racism. The research team witnessed issues of power and justice threading their way through stories. We situated the experience of low-income tenants of refugee and immigrant background within a larger picture of segregation and policy (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). Taking action became an underlying goal for the research team and CRT provided a theoretical framework to articulate political and systemic spaces where the community could intervene and impact policy. It seemed impossible to examine the experiences of individuals with refugee and immigrant background without taking concepts such as intersectionality, class, and ideology into consideration.

Key Findings

The research team identified the following themes as they relate to the experiences of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background. Participant names have been changed to protect their identity. In describing experiences of renting in Salt Lake County, participants spoke to the general experience of being a low-income renter and specifically as someone who had immigrated or been resettled in the United States. They used this space to speak back to stereotypes and inform action. They also incorporated critiques of current policy and power imbalances in the context of housing.

Key themes describing the experiences of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background include lack of housing options, inhibiting communication, the fine print, language barriers, barriers to accessing and understanding rights, and stereotyping. These experiences came together to inform larger analytic themes of lack of transparency, feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness, and lack of landlord accountability. Participants described negotiations of power throughout their experiences, which describe how tenants with refugee and immigrant background survive and maintain stable housing within the power-imbalanced environment. While experiences are delineated to describe the participants' experiences, as Figure 1 shows, these experiences all come together to inform the experiences of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background and are not discrete experiences.

Negotiating Power

While participants used the focus groups to share experiences and feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness in the tenant-landlord relationship, they also told their

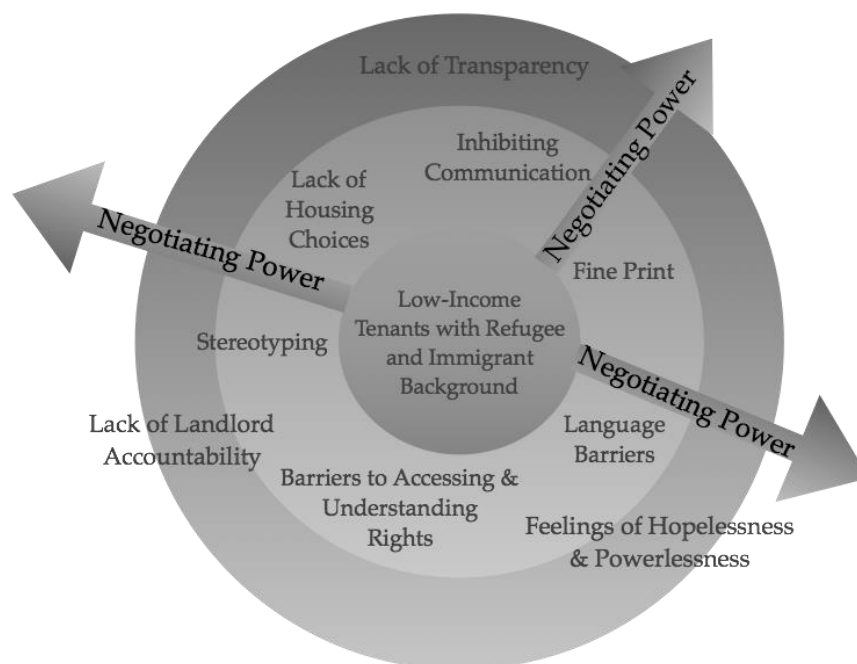


Figure 1: Key Findings

stories of negotiating the imbalance of power and challenging the stereotypes they had experienced. Participants framed their experiences with descriptions of how they had negotiated power within the current rental landscape (see Figure 1). There was a sense of urgency as they told a counter-story describing all the steps they had taken to maintain their stable housing amidst a mostly unsupportive or counteractive environment. “I cleaned the house three times with my wife. Three times, three sessions” (Samer). Negotiating power was critical to survival in the housing context.

Participants negotiating power included accessing systems already in place to support low-income tenants, as well as developing their own approach to maintain their homes and survive in the rental system. With regards to accessing systems that were already in place, when available, participants described accessing free or affordable legal services through local housing advocates, particularly to file a discrimination complaint.

They described speaking with their landlord and putting requests for maintenance in writing as effective in navigating maintaining a stable and secure home. For individuals who had been resettled with refugee status, they spoke of working with their resettlement agency case managers to provide mediation between them and their landlord. Participants described reaching out to local churches and nonprofits for monetary assistance when they had trouble paying their rent or fees. Tenants also spoke about their agency to refuse to sign a lease they did not understand and to choose another apartment after exhausting all other options; however, this was hindered by participants' understanding that affordable options were difficult to come by.

With regards to developing their own approach to maintaining their home and negotiating power, participants described keeping their home very clean, explicitly pointing out that they never smoked, kept pets, or drank alcohol in their home. For example, Anwar shared, "I used to keep that apartment very clean. I never smoked, even outside the apartment. And nobody in my family smoked. We had no pets." Another example of negotiating power was tied to bringing trusted family members or friends in to translate important documents or conversations with landlords. Participants spoke about taking matters into their own hands when landlords were unresponsive, such as exterminating pests on their own by buying their own pest control treatment or relying on traditional methods of pest control. They shared that they would go to a mutual assistance office for answers to questions and access to resources. Miguel spoke of a time he developed and formalized his role as a tenant advocate in his apartment complex, until management changed and ended their working agreement. Finally, participants spoke extensively of a shared concern for others in their community who may be facing the

experiences they had had, or what they had heard in the focus groups and there was a strong desire to contribute to efforts to change or “help overcome” (Alan) current tenant-landlord power imbalances.

Feelings of Hopelessness and Powerlessness

Feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness were informed by experiences related to barriers to accessing and understanding their rights, language barriers, fine print, lack of housing choices, and inhibiting communication. Participants described feeling hopeless and powerless not only as a result of their experiences, but also as having a paralyzing effect. Hopelessness had a paralyzing effect, preventing some tenants from accessing rights. Their realities led to feelings of hopelessness, which in turn served as a barrier to taking future action. Hosni stated, “People give up instead of going to court.” This is compounded by participants’ fear of deportation or damage to their credit if they reported unfair treatment.

Hopelessness came to bear as tenants shared experiences where they felt they’d done all they could, but still experienced negative consequences. Many, specifically with regards to pest extermination and caring for their apartments, shared this feeling of “no matter what I do,” they would be charged fees or evicted. Amin expressed, “And the management will say, ‘Tell someone to be ready...be clean. Clean your everything.’ But no matter how that person cleans...no matter how that person gets ready...they are never clean.”

Participants expressed that when individuals immigrate or resettle to the United States, it is often with a sense of hope for a new life for themselves and their families.

Over time, this sense of hope can be overshadowed by continual personal and shared experiences related to housing, among other social issues. The high expectations for a better life increased the sense of hopelessness when confronted with unstable housing.

As Amiin explained,

A refugee camp back home, whether it's Kenya or Thailand, it doesn't matter, and...they get the approval to come here. People will tell them things. Oh, we were told, me personally, 'Oh you go to America you can walk on the street. You can see yourself. Like, it is so clean that the floor is like a mirror.'

These glamorous images of the U.S. leave tenants unprepared and caught off guard when confronted with issues. This is amplified when newly resettled individuals and families learn they cannot return to their country of origin.

A tenant's agency was most apparent in their ability to choose a home; however, the lack of housing options and affordability led to many participants feeling stuck.

There simply are not enough affordable, stable rental options in the area (Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013). Participants described the vital role resettlement agencies play in housing individuals with refugee and immigrant background and how this coincides with the lack of choice about where to live when they first arrive. Many expressed that they would have chosen to live closer to family or in better maintained apartments. Abroon described feeling like a prisoner, sharing,

The renter is nothing compared to the landlord. It's like a prison guard and the prisoner. The landlord has the deposit and the renter signed 6 months. Until the contract is up, the renter is a prisoner...they cannot do anything.

Additionally, a resettlement agency case manager is partly responsible for assisting tenants with refugee background in navigating the complex tenant-landlord relationship and ensuring stable housing.

Sometimes, case managers are unable to meet the intense demands necessary to

mediate due to time constraints and the fine line case managers walk as they advocate for recently resettled refugees while maintaining a relationship with the landlord for future housing. As Lwin put it, “The resettlement agencies, they cannot listen to all the complaints and go against the landlord...so it just takes time.” Tenants perceived this as contributing to lack of advocacy for tenants unfamiliar with the rental system.

Lack of Landlord Accountability

Another analytic theme describing the experience of tenants with refugee and immigrant background is lack of landlord accountability. Lack of landlord accountability includes experiences related to accessing and understanding rights, stereotyping, the fine print, and inhibited communication. It is also by informed tenants’ feelings of helplessness and powerlessness. As Ugyen shared,

We don’t have attorneys. We don’t know where to go and then we don’t have the money to afford the lawyers and they have everything in their line of site. And they say, ‘OK, if you don’t do that, we’ll do this.’ But we don’t have anything to say, ‘OK, if you don’t do that, we will do this.’

Specific experiences related to accessing and understanding rights made it challenging for tenants to exercise their power in the tenant-landlord relationship.

Understanding and accessing rights is the cornerstone of the tenant-landlord experience, and informs tenant experiences and perceptions of accountability and establishing responsibility. The experience of being new to the U.S. rental system was tied to gaps in knowledge with regards to understanding rights and accessing resources such as mediation or pro bono law clinics that are put in place to help tenants navigate the rental system and access rights. Without a basic understanding of rights or acclimation to resources, many tenants with refugee and immigrant background were left feeling

powerless. As Anwar stated,

These people don't even know about it. They don't have any power whatsoever. They don't even know that they can go somewhere to get help. They don't even know that help exists. Since they don't know, they don't seek and they just do whatever they are told.

Understanding rights and resources is often the target of advocacy work for low-income tenants in Salt Lake City, as many agencies provide information sessions aimed at educating tenants, but this is only one piece of the puzzle and these findings challenge this assumption that lack of knowledge is the driving force for not accessing rights. The burden to hold landlords accountable and access rights is heightened for renters with low-incomes, due in part to the time needed to take off work and lack of affordable options. Policy assumes access to legal counsel or resources, but this proves more difficult for people who cannot afford a lawyer on their own or take time off work to meet with lawyers or attend hearings. To this point, Hosni shared,

People say, 'Yeah, if it sounds unfair you just go to the court.' I mean, it sounds so easy, you know? And even though we respect the court... we know how difficult it is to go through the process...so it could be very frustrating. I mean...you don't want to go to the court for a \$50 refund you know? And it's not accessible.

Challenging landlords was described as a triple burden of missing work, paying for lawyers, and paying accruing fees from the landlord. Moe describes this:

It might be lengthy and people might think it is very difficult to go through all these process because refugees are not aware, they do not have any knowledge of legal system and how it works and they cannot hire a lawyer and they have no money to afford all those things. And then finally they give up, 'Ok, I'll pay on an installment rather than take on all this trouble. I'll pay my money and finish.'

Participants who had immigrated undocumented or been resettled with refugee status expressed a shared perception that because many people in their communities do not know and understand or cannot access their rights, they will continue to be taken

advantage of.

Participants expressed fear of retaliation, and specifically deportation for communities who have immigrated to the U.S. without documentation, if they confronted their landlord about issues, even if it was clear the tenant had justification to hold a landlord accountable based on terms of the lease. Palo shared, “And I can speak for some of the undocumented population that I know, and they will tell you not to pressure for their rights because of those before, being threatened to be exposed.”

Regardless of their immigration status, participants described feeling stereotyped and targeted because of their race. They described stereotyping as providing a rationale for landlords to hold them responsible for issues with the rental. Stereotypes varied between people who resettled with refugee status and people who immigrated from countries in Central America. People resettled as refugees described being stereotyped as dirty and carrying pests. Individuals who immigrated from Central America were stereotyped as undocumented, regardless of their immigration status. As Moe pointed out,

Landlords, they think that refugees come up with cockroaches. They bring bugs. And there are so many families that have been made to pay for all those things...they have paid thousands of dollars.

When tenants approached their landlords about pests in their apartments, many landlords would hold the tenant responsible, regardless of the pre-existing conditions of the apartment.

Similarly, people who had immigrated to the United States described being stereotyped as undocumented regardless of their immigration status. Natasha told us,

I find that landlords, when they hear my accent, they assume immediately that I am undocumented, that I am not educated, and that I would not go...do not know

my rights, and they mistreat me and don't do the right thing. As a result, being able to speak English and have the appearance of someone born in the U.S. was considered lucky because these characteristics were associated with power and were perceived as avenues to hold landlords accountable.

Lack of Transparency

Lack of transparency in the tenant-landlord relationship was attributed to the confusing fine print in rental agreements, language barriers, and inhibiting communication between tenants and landlords. Tenants identified fine print as contributing to a lack of transparency throughout much of the tenant-landlord experience, which led many to believe the landlord was being coercive. As Arthur put it, "They're kind of putting you under pressure and coercion to get money..." Lack of transparency, barriers to understanding and accessing rights, and fine print left many tenants feeling landlords were intentionally taking advantage of them to increase profit.

This lack of transparency and feelings of coercion are tied to signing documents and language barriers. Participants described signing documents as having critical implications in transferring fiscal responsibility defined in fine print. Language barriers were considered in the context of immigration and resettlement, as tenants expressed powerlessness as a result of not being able to read or understand an entire rental agreement. Inability to interpret a lease and lack of connection to resources has led to tenants paying disputable fees, staying in unstable housing, or eviction.

While language barriers were a big issue in signing, the timing of signing also posed a significant barrier to understanding and exercising rights. Tenants described

signing what they were told with little time or resource to read and understand fine print, compounded with a paralyzing feeling of powerlessness. Participants talked about the unique experience of people newly resettled in the U.S. and the overwhelming amount of paperwork to sign in a language they cannot read. Signing documents begins at the start of the resettlement process and feels intimidating because of the timing and implications.

Lane describes:

When I came, I'm talking to the apartment through the agency. I never know what was written in the letter. I do not...we are just supposed to sign it, we signed it. We never read it, what was there. And later on, now the agency will slowly take off their hands. And we are responsible for everything and we even do not know what we are signing.

After arduous days of travel and arrival to a new city in the middle of night, many are told to sign documents immediately in order to move into the home.

Power shifts when signing documents. Tenants with refugee and immigrant background felt a disproportionate amount of responsibility shift away from the landlord and onto the tenant. This informed lack of transparency and confusion over responsibility with regards to dealing with issues such as pest control, enforcing regulation with other tenants, and fixing things in their apartments. Specifically, tenants had questions with regards to landlord accountability when returning deposits, making administrative mistakes, and inhibiting communication with tenants. Lack of accountability and shifts in responsibility led to frustration, particularly when paying for mistakes they felt were no fault of their own.

Lack of communication between tenants and landlords comes as a result of norms and practices put in place to hinder direct communication between tenants and landlords. Participants spoke at length about difficulty in communicating with landlords about

issues with their apartment, disputing charges/deposits after they moved out, urgent situations (fire, break-in), and receiving charges/threats of eviction without warning. Many described a one-way communication pattern from landlords posting notices seemingly at will to a tenant with largely conditional opportunity to respond.

Participants described conditions put in place in order to effectively communicate with landlords. As displayed in Table 1, participants perceived conditions for tenant-to-landlord communication as much more restricted than landlord-to-tenant communication. A landlord's ability to communicate with the tenant is not dependent on tenant availability. Participants expressed frustration because many felt landlords have power to post charges at their discretion, but are not required to make themselves available when a tenant disputes charges. The tenant, however, meets many barriers in attempting to communicate with their landlord. As Sanda shared, "Oh, we need to be very nice, very

Table 1: Conditions of Tenant-Landlord Communication

Landlord → Tenant	Tenant → Landlord
Conditions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not dependent on tenant availability (written notices) • Might include owner in drafting lease agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak in English • Write in English • Camera to usually record • Time to read contracts and leases • Dependent on access to legal services • Dependent on landlord availability • If in writing, landlord signature required • If in writing, use specific forms • Must speak cordially
Consequences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will not collect charged fee • Lose job for not collecting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eviction • Homeless • Paying unsubstantiated charges

polite. If we are frustrated, then they will never come.” Consequences of ineffective communication with the landlord can be detrimental, leading to charges and false assurances for the tenant. For example, a tenant will receive verbal assurances that their landlord will respond to an issue, only to later receive a notice of charges the tenant cannot refute because the assurance was not in writing. This has contributed to a lack of transparency and imbalance of power in the tenant-landlord relationship.

Discussion

The experience of low-income tenants with refugee or immigrant background came across as the intersectionality of race, country of origin, and class. Participants described their experiences as tenants who are not White, have refugee and immigrant background, and have low incomes. Participants described comfort with the rental system and ability to speak English as characteristics that set some renters with refugee and immigrant background apart. There was a perception that people from countries with Western practices and familiarity with capitalism and housing were treated better than those from less developed, more rural countries. This speaks to Crenshaw’s (1989) discussion of intersectionality, describing when policy filters experiences through a singular lens of race, tension may develop as diverse groups speak out about their strengths and needs.

In making sense of findings in participatory analysis, CVHE utilized the Aspen Institute’s (2004) structural racism framework to understand how the experiences of tenants with refugee and immigrant background fit into a larger structural context of housing. As described above, the structural racism framework outlines the context,

current manifestations, and outcomes of structural racism. The context of the current rental market is shaped by the collision of two worlds: the landlord/owner's bottom-line and the everyday lives of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background. Renting to low-income tenants in neighborhoods where development is affordable can be profitable for landlords (Desmond, 2016). In addition to this, in Salt Lake County, this context is also shaped by a culture of speedy evictions. Participant experiences related to barriers to communicating with their landlords and navigating the fine print highlight how the intersection of these two worlds come to inform the everyday lived experiences of tenants with refugee and immigrant background. Participants and researchers felt landlords were not entirely to blame for the negative experiences described by participants, as they too were oftentimes faced with lack of options or control in an effort to maintain their bottom-line or follow policy. The implications of negotiating with tenants might mean making decisions that challenge owner expectations of increasing the bottom-line, placing a burden on both the tenant and the landlord.

In addition to the intersection of these two worlds, the context of the rental market is also shaped by racism in the media. Landlords and property owners come to receive "bits of information" in the media (Aspen Institute, 2004). These bits of information fuel fear and lead to stereotyping based on an individual's race and country of origin. Participants described experiences of stereotyping, which many felt were providing a rationale for unfair treatment.

The context of the rental market is also shaped by our national values of meritocracy, individualism, and equal opportunity. In the context of the lived experiences of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background, this

perpetuates the assumption that tenants can work harder, attain better paying jobs, and find safer, more stable homes for themselves if they had the internal drive. It also assumes that people have, or can find, jobs that give them time off to navigate the legal system. What CVHE heard in the focus groups is that individuals with refugee and immigrant background are really facing a triple burden in trying to access their rights: missing work, paying for lawyers, and paying accruing fees from landlords. In addition to this, the ability to find a better paying job is not solely based on individual talent or effort. As Anis points out, “In America, people say, there is... always running to and from work. We are always running to make ends meet, but we are not making enough money to meet our needs.”

Current manifestations of structural racism are present in the distribution of resources for the development of affordable housing. The lack of subsidies to maintain affordable housing and long waiting lists for rental assistance programs perpetuate the lack of housing options for low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background (Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2015). As a result, low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background felt powerless, as even if they understood and could access their rights, there were not many options for them to find stable and affordable housing in Salt Lake County. This stress is heightened for large families (Salt Lake City Corporation, 2013).

In addition to this, local and federal tenant-landlord policy perpetuates the lack of landlord accountability. The Federal Fair Housing Act and Utah tenant-landlord policy rely too heavily on tenants’ complaints and do little to prevent unfair treatment of tenants with refugee and immigrant background. Participants spoke specifically about barriers to

accessing their rights, stereotyping, and barriers to effectively communicate or mediate with landlords when tensions do arise.

While current context and policy perpetuate structural racism in the rental market, participants described ways they survive and negotiate power in this climate. Participants described maintaining very clean homes, utilizing traditional remedies for pest control, helping and relying on help from community, using a trusted family/friend for translating, reaching out to mutual assistance offices for support and access to resources, and creating a community liaison between tenants and landlords. Participants spoke in solidarity as low-income renters of refugee or immigrant background, expressing a shared concern for their communities. As Palo put it, “There is the case that there is somebody in the community that will walk with you towards the management and try to translate or talk for you.” They described this collective concern for others especially if they were able to speak English or communicate with their landlord.

Researchers pointed out, in their experience, people with refugee or immigrant background tend to rely on families to support each other. If a family is evicted, this puts pressure on the family’s social network to assist and provide housing. This kind of experience is supported in the research, which also identifies the lack of resources for refugee resettlement services in the United States (Brown & Scribner, 2014; Capps et al, 2015).

Action

As the research team sat around the table to discuss the implications of our research, it became clear that experiences of the participants were also ours. “That is how

I feel right now. When I read this, it hits me...when you start being honest with yourself you start to see things.” As we unexpectedly moved through Freire’s (1992) process of conscientization, it opened up vulnerabilities and contributed to our urgency to respond. The urgency to respond fueled our conversation around what action could look like. Although many participants described feelings of hopelessness, we probed for solutions. At times, we were met with laughter, other times with expressions of frustration from a history of empty promises to respond. In the end, many focus group participants contributed to a conversation on how to respond.

Tenants’ negotiations of power and critiques of current policy have informed recommendations for policy change. Policy should focus on putting systems in place that improve communication between tenants & landlords. This includes a critique of current communication processes and solutions that meet the needs of both tenants and landlords. This would require an understanding of the overlap between tenants’ lived experiences and the landlord or owner’s bottom-line. Policy could also be put in place that incentivizes or mandates the use of mediation services and translation of important communication.

It is clear there is a need for increased funding for services and development of affordable housing. Increasing funding for services includes funding for more formalized services for tenants with refugee and immigrant background, including resources for housing lawyers, mediation training for case managers, and more case managers to provide more individualized attention to tenants. Increasing funding for the development of affordable housing means increasing public funding for maintaining & building affordable housing across the County. This would mean increasing subsidies such as

HOME subsidies and increasing awareness of how to access the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit.

Participants who had been resettled with refugee background underscored the importance of placing families in apartments that are stable and safe, which may require the development of affordable, sustainable housing and additional resource allocation to refugee resettlement agencies. Additionally, individuals with refugee and immigrant background who are unfamiliar with renting should receive extensive training, utilizing effective teaching principles, on how to navigate the tenant-landlord relationship.

Tenants spoke about utilizing community liaisons to mediate between landlords and residents. Formalizing such a process could put systems into place that increase effective communication between tenants and landlords. This would be mutually beneficial for landlords and tenants. Landlords could have more time to focus on maintaining the property and recruiting future tenants instead of constantly responding to urgent tenant needs. Current tenants could ask more questions to understand landlord concerns and respond in a way that is in their best interest. They might also have more opportunities to hold landlords accountable.

Policy changes needs to include an increase in access to legal services. This may mean more funding for free or reduced-price legal services for low-income tenants, or an increase in alternatives to going to court, such as mediation. Given the gap in access to rights, CVHE organized what was, to the best of our knowledge, the first Fair Housing Expo in Salt Lake County. See Appendix B for the Fair Housing Expo flyer. The expo took place midday on a Saturday to accommodate hectic schedules of those we work with. We also had Somali-, Spanish-, and Arabic-speaking translators on site. At this

event, we organized a pro bono law clinic and had fair housing service providers and mediators table and share resources. Families were able to access many advocates under one roof. In addition, they were able to access legal services, a significant need identified in the focus groups. While accessing legal services was tied to availability of affordable services, this issue is more complex and bringing together multiple service providers allowed us to collaborate to bring our resources, such as mediation services and discrimination experts, together.

While families were able to access legal services and resources, service providers also came together in an environment that centered the experiences of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background. Service providers talked to CVHE researchers regarding findings and experiences as PAR researchers. Service providers also shared information regarding how their services could fit the unique needs of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background. This expo fueled the need for future discussions and action that brings service providers who tackle multiple issues related to the experience of low-income renters. Everyone in attendance expressed a desire to facilitate a fair housing expo again and CVHE plans to organize another in the coming year.

Community Voices for Housing Equality is an ongoing participatory action research project. We are looking forward and shaping possibilities for continued research. Given the lack of research centered on the experience of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background, CVHE's research generated baseline information. More research can be done examining the unique experiences of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background, and particularly the magnitude

of these experiences. Understanding that tenants felt they have had unique experiences because of their refugee or immigrant background, future research could focus on the intersections of race and housing. It is critical to hear from owners, landlords, and refugee and immigrant service providers to understand this issue from a different angle or perspective as well. A thorough policy analysis would uncover deeper gaps in policy and targeted political action.

This research has practical social work implications that span the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of the field. Responding to these findings contributes to improving the tenant-landlord relationship, decreasing unsubstantiated charges, and decreasing involuntary mobility in the community. On the micro and mezzo level, social workers can work as mediators between tenants and landlords, understanding the unique experiences of tenants with refugee and immigrant background. This can mean taking into consideration the impact of stereotyping on landlords' perceptions of tenant behavior. Additionally, in considering the context of the tenant-landlord relationships, social workers can learn more about the overlap of the business and low-income tenants' world. Social workers can provide translation of important documents, as this is critical for understanding rights, roles, and responsibilities. If they are working with resettlement agencies as case workers, they can work with their agencies to put policies in place that allow individuals with refugee background time to read and understand leases.

That being said, many of the issues that have been identified are linked to larger structures that perpetuate structural racism. As a result, social workers can take on a macro role and amplify the negotiations of power highlighted by participants in these focus groups. In doing so, social workers can work to formalize the existing negotiations

of power as well as advocate for largely political changes regarding the allocation of resources and increasing access to rights.

There is an urgent need to increase trust between low-income tenants of refugee and immigrant background and landlords. Participants suggested starting a coalition that includes both low-income tenants and landlords to discuss current issues and work together towards mutually beneficial solutions. As Mohamed said:

If there is anyone that can do something about it, we will welcome, we will work with that person and if someone can distribute the power, give tenant power and give landlord power, and it will be similar power, we are ready for that and we welcome that.

It is clear we are ready for change. The tenant-landlord relationship is situated within a larger system of uneven power dynamics. It is our hope that CVHE is a part of any changes that take place with regards to the tenant landlord relationship to ensure these voices are shared and parallel targeted efforts to eliminate segregation.

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CHAPTER 4

PAR AS FOUNDATIONAL SOCIAL WORK: A FRAMEWORK FOR PRACTICE AND RESEARCH OF IMMIGRATION AND RESETTLEMENT

Abstract

This article links PAR to the field of social work, as research that amplifies social issues (Fine & Torre, 2006) related to experiences of immigration and resettlement. Participatory action research is nested within social work praxis and uniquely suited to the profession (Finn, 1994; Finn & Jacobson, 2008). To this end, this article highlights a review of the history of PAR, the interconnections of PAR and social work (SW) and specifically how PAR has and can be facilitated in collaboration with individuals of refugee and immigrant background. Possibilities of the integration of PAR and SW in examining experiences of immigration and resettlement include bringing diverse communities together (Torre, 2009), utilizing PAR as a space to develop new subjectivities (Cahill, 2007), engaging in a critical discussion of power evolutions in the PAR process (Healy, 2001; Koirala-Azad, 2009-2010), including an ethic of reciprocity in the PAR process (Maiter, Simich, Jacobson, & Wise, 2008), and community accompaniment within PAR (Finn & Jacobson, 2008; Hall, 2001). Critical PAR holds possibility as a paradigm uniquely suited to engaging in research that unearths circuits of

injustice and integrates critical theoretical frameworks throughout the research process (Fox et al., 2010; Torre, Fine, Stoudt, & Fox, 2012).

Introduction

Valerie Francisco (2013) shared a participatory action research (PAR) with Filipino domestic workers in New York City, placing the systemic labor export market alongside personal community experiences. In doing so, community networks were strengthened and a story of migration amplified for political change. Cahill, Quijada Cerecer, and Bradley (2010) engaged in PAR with Mestizo Arts and Activism, a community-university partnership that collaboratively engages high school students, artists, and university faculty and staff towards positive community change. From this PAR project, action emerged where youth analyzed and lobbied for bills with personal and political implications, alongside their own reflection and development of subjectivities. Lykes (2013) engages in sets of small PAR projects with survivors of Guatemalan armed conflicts and in doing so challenges a dominant model of trauma and inaccurate universal representations of this community. She describes the Mayan women's creative process, including community mapping and photoPAR, as a space to generate praxis and offer possibilities.

These examples highlight the transformative impact of PAR and situate PAR in a simultaneously place-based yet global context. They provide a pathway for examining how social work researchers can engage with communities locally and across borders to examine experiences of immigration and resettlement. Social workers utilizing PAR to understand immigration and resettlement create a space to foster knowledge that

transforms ahistorical practice models and research approaches. In doing so, the field of social work benefits from an influx of critical pedagogy, research, and practice.

Social work researchers can utilize PAR to recognize and describe personal and community experiences with immigration and resettlement, but even with a foundation in social justice, social workers engaged in PAR are not common (Branom, 2012; Francisco, 2013). Social workers can significantly contribute to the field by acknowledging intersections of social work and PAR, generally, and its appropriateness in examining experiences of migration, specifically. It is time for a more thoughtful and critical analysis of PAR approaches, findings, and its relevance to practice and research in our field (Healy, 2001).

Participatory action research and social work seem to be an epistemological match made in heaven. Social work is rooted in addressing and challenging systems of oppression and grounded in the communities who have been typically underrepresented in decisions that affect them. Today, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) “seeks to enhance the effective functioning and well-being of individuals, families and communities through its work and through its advocacy.” Similarly, PAR affirms itself as a social justice oriented approach to research, to not only bolster voices and experiences, but to facilitate action (Finn, 1994; Johnston-Goodstar, 2013). The principles of PAR and social work align and it is critical for social workers to be familiar with this approach to break reliance on top-down research and practice approaches that perpetuate imbalances in power (Branom, 2012; Johnston-Goodstar, 2013).

Fine (1992) referred to “social silences through the social sciences” (p. 206). Have social workers utilized PAR as a tool to challenge this reproduction of social

sciences? How do PAR processes link social work practice and knowledge generation (Greenwood, Whyte, & Harkavy, 1993)? How are social work values embedded in the PAR process? Participatory action research can challenge dominant social work practice and diversify knowledge generation. One way to consider the application of PAR is as a way to contribute to the library of research written *by* or *with* communities and ask questions of research *about* communities.

In considering experiences of migration, relying only on research written *about* communities can perpetuate a belief that cultural expertise exists, that research subjects are separated from the researcher. Cultural expertise perpetuates stereotypes that create policy that may not necessarily reflect diverse needs and strengths of individuals or communities (Yu & Liu, 1986). Centering community voices is critical as it can uncover overgeneralizations, provide opportunities to collaborate on the development of findings that inform policy, and amplify the library of existing community-generated findings. The objective of this article is to highlight PAR as a foundational SW framework for working with new arriving communities of immigrant and refugee background.

Definition of PAR

Participatory action research has been founded on the pursuit of justice, grounds itself in evidence, and is aimed at reform (Stoudt, 2009). “It is a political use of research by community members to better understand and improve their own communities” (Stoudt, 2009, p. 8). It is a complex process that Cahill (2007) succinctly sums up as “a collaborative approach in which those typically ‘studied’ are involved as decision-makers and co-researchers in some or all stages of research” (p. 268). Researchers are

stakeholders, community members, academics, and people dedicated to social justice.

A PAR approach to research is instrumental in informing socio-political change (Cahill, 2007; Francisco, 2013). Additionally, it is evolving as an interdisciplinary field represented by adaptations and theoretical interpretations of what participation and action in research mean. Reason and Bradbury (2001b) refer to PAR as a ‘family’ of action research approaches.

A family which sometimes argues and falls out, may at times ignore some of its members, has certain members who wish to dominate, yet a family which sees itself as different from other forms of research, and is certainly willing to pull together in the face of criticism or hostility from supposedly ‘objective’ ways of doing research. (p. xxiii)

Variations in participatory action research approaches can be confusing for control-oriented researchers, but flexibility in interpreting social-justice-oriented principles makes PAR particularly suited to adapting to a specific community and individual context. Theories evolving from PAR are linked to real impact and reinforce strength in communities (Reason and Bradbury, 2001a).

The purpose of this article is to link PAR to the field of social work, as research that amplifies social issues (Fine & Torre, 2006) related to experiences of immigration and resettlement. Participatory action research is nested within social work praxis, linking theory, practice, and self-reflection (Finn & Jacobson, 2008). It is an approach to research social work can embrace as uniquely suited to the profession (Finn, 1994). To this end, this article highlights a review of the history of PAR, the interconnections of PAR and SW, and specifically PAR possibilities for collaboration with individuals of refugee and immigrant background.

History of PAR

Participatory action research has evolved as an approach to research that transcends boundaries of science and practice, fraying the lines between researchers and researched. Theoretical underpinnings of PAR stem from various fields of practice (i.e., agriculture, community development, social work) and current uses reflect its diverse and rich background (McTaggart, 1991). For example, Fals-Borda (2001) identifies liberation components of PAR while Adelman (1993) describes PAR from the perspective of Kurt Lewin. Cahill, Quijada, and Bradley (2010) highlight feminist origins of PAR, while McTaggart (1991) frames PAR within a broader critical social theory perspective.

As an epistemology, PAR has been linked to post-structuralism, acknowledging and challenging uneven power dynamics in the production of knowledge and pedagogy (Cahill, 2007). Post-structuralism has been used to frame PAR as a process of self-identification, exploring the role hegemonic thought plays in shaping self-identity and subjectivity (Cahill, 2007; Reason & Bradbury, 2001a). As PAR has been informed by theories, so too does it continue to strengthen theoretical perspectives. PAR itself has been adapted in interpreting integration of practice and theory. For example, Black Emancipatory Action Research (BEAR) has developed as a form of research integrating race and critical participatory action research (CPAR) (Akom, 2011).

Theoretical frameworks and conceptual contributions can be imagined as winding and intersecting roads: critical psychology, political foundations, and critical theory. “Many different roads lead to action research, depending on where individuals start out from, and in terms of more general strategies of justification” (Eikeland, 2001, p. 145).

The critical psychology foundations of PAR draw from the work of Kurt Lewin. Political foundations are largely focused on challenging foundations of power to create system-level change. Critical theory is a foundation for PAR today, informing the development of critical PAR.

The critical psychology foundations of PAR largely come from the work of Kurt Lewin. Lewin's research primarily focused on workplace environment, understanding human experiences to increase organizational effectiveness (Pasmore, 2001). Participation was conceptualized as a factor of industrial productivity (Akom, 2011; McTaggart, 1991). Socio-technical researchers connected theoretical debates to actual applications of findings in industry.

Kurt Lewin, heralded as the founder of PAR, introduced the theory of social psychology in 1934, in direct contrast to Taylorism (Adelman, 1993). A refugee himself, having fled Berlin in 1933 before beginning his work at Cornell, Lewin made an effort to develop a program of action, the Psychological Institute of the Hebrew University. This institute aimed "to develop better communities by helping the new immigrants to Palestine to adjust and thrive in their new environment" (Adelman, 1993, p. 8). Lewin's work followed a cyclical pattern Torre (2014) describes as "a spiral of self-reflective cycles of fact-finding, action, observation, evaluation, and then replanning" (p. 2). In the process of connecting practice and theory, Lewin brought community members into the research and emphasized self-reflection and adaptation (Adelman, 1993; McTaggart, 1991; Torre, 2014).

The political thread of the history of PAR refers to movements challenging distributions of power, particularly governing bodies or structures. These political

experiences stem from movements of survival and urgency, shifting the focus of PAR from that of a process that focuses on informing theory to that which informs theory, self, *and* challenges power imbalances in research and policy (Akom, 2011; Fals-Borda, 2001; Reason & Bradbury, 2001a). From a liberationist perspective, PAR is necessary for survival, creating spaces of resistance to discriminatory political structures (Hall, 2001). According to Hall (2001), “one of the most important and fascinating lessons from the past that we can use for the future is that participatory research was very largely theorized and disseminated from a social movement or civil society base” (p. 176).

In the United States, political manifestations of PAR can be linked to the Highlander Institute as well as the foundation of social work in the settlement house movement. The Highlander Institute, co-founded by Myles Horton in the 1930s, is a pioneer for training community members in critical action. It was known for its role in training civil rights activist to engage in peaceful protest around the nation (Torre, 2014). The settlement house movement laid foundations for social work practice and participatory approaches to research in the United States with people with immigrant experiences (Finn, Jacobson, & Campana, 2004). Research exposed social conditions associated with immigration and translated problems into needs of the community (Finn, Jacobson, & Campana, 2004; Harkavy & Puckett, 1994).

PAR’s global roots articulate how it is relevant and useful in seeking to understand and amplify experiences of immigration and resettlement. Action research sprung up around the world from the work of Paulo Freire, Orlando Fals-Borda, Myles Horton, and Marja-Liisa Swantz (Akom, 2011; Hall, 2001; Fals-Borda, 2001; Swantz, Ndedya, and Masaiganah, 2001) Action research roots are deep in Latin America and

Tanzania where communities and co-researchers responded to oppressive structures of multinational corporations (Finn, 1994; Reason & Bradbury, 2001a). In particular, action research emerged in response to exploitative globalized production strategies, such as multinational corporations settling into economically poor communities, exploiting local workers with low wages and unfair labor practices (Cabeza, Reese, & Waller, 2007; Finn, 1994).

In the 1950s and 60s, Paulo Freire worked with poor, illiterate farm workers in South America to engage in popular education and conscientização (Cahill, 2007). Conscientização “refers to learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (Freire, 1992, p. 19). Freire’s pedagogy of the oppressed connected personal, political, and self-reflective participation (Cahill, 2007; Freire, 1992; Finn & Jacobson, 2008). Freire worked with influential liberationists Orlando Fals-Borda, Marja-Liisa Swantz, and Guillermo Bonfil (Fals-Borda, 2001). Many of these liberationists held positions in higher education, where they felt “colleagues who claimed to work with ‘neutrality’ or ‘objectivity’ supported, willingly or unwillingly, the status quo” (p. 29).

Participatory action research draws on critical theories to move away from research focused on increasing participation and taking action to meet specific outcomes, to research that also questions goals and origination of research collaboratives (DePoy, Hartman, & Haslett, 1999; Fox et al., 2010; Torre, Fine, Stoudt, & Fox, 2012). Critical PAR is an approach to research that “expands notions of expert knowledge; recognizes individuals’ multiple, overlapping, potentially conflicting identities, loyalties and allegiances; complicates identity categories; and makes the political nature of knowledge

production explicit” (Torre, 2009, p. 112). Critical race and feminist theories highlight how the PAR space creates opportunities to bring diverse groups together as a research collective to challenge uneven power dynamics in larger systems (Maguire, 2001; Torre, 2009).

Feminism centers divisions of gender identification as a foundation for oppression (Maguire, 2001). In an attempt to understand how feminism informed action research, Maguire (2001) points to PAR and feminist dissections of *uneven ground*, in power, opportunity, and voice (Maguire, 2001, p.59). Incorporating feminist theory into PAR also led to the development of what Cahill, Quijada, and Bradley (2010) refer to as critical hope in feminist praxis. “Critical hope necessitates the active struggle ‘against the evidence in order to change the deadly tides of inequality, group xenophobia, and personal despair’” (p. 407). Critical hope is our call to action and informs possibility (Finn & Jacobson, 2008).

PAR as Foundational Social Work

Participatory action research is uniquely suited to social-justice-oriented social work and makes significant contributions to social work pedagogy, research, and practice. While some acknowledge PAR’s fit within the field of social work (Finn, 1994; Finn & Jacobson, 2008), social work research embedded in PAR is an exception. The parallels and intersections of PAR and social work are emphasized by reflecting on social work history, overlaying values of PAR with values and ethics of social work, reflecting on PAR and social work as community-driven interventions, and focusing on PAR and social work as amplifiers of community-based knowledge.

Social work seems to have evolved from a profession more closely resembling a PAR approach in community work to practice focused on individual and community pathology (Ehrenreich, 1985; Finn & Jacobson, 2008). For example, in its infancy at the turn of the 20th century, the Hull House was framing social work as a social change agent (Finn & Jacobson, 2008). At this time, social work research emerged as teams of outside investigators and community member stakeholders became co-researchers in the administration of the community survey (Finn, Jacobson, & Campana, 2004).

In the 1930s, as the pressure to professionalize and maintain positions of power grew heavy, social work shifted from targeting “moral problems” of society to “mental problems” of an individual (Ehrenreich, 1985, p. 74). Pressures to professionalize encouraged social workers to impose psychoanalytic theories on individuals living within oppressive structures (Ehrenreich, 1985; Finn, Jacobson, & Campana, 2004). Social action became less common, voices and decision-making power of marginalized communities silenced. Social workers helped individuals become more functional in oppressive structures of a dysfunctional society. This contributed to “social silences through the social sciences” (Fine, 1992, p. 206).

PAR and Social Work Values

Social work and PAR values are very closely related and highlight how social workers are uniquely poised to utilize PAR as a foundation for social work education, practice, and research (see Figure 2). Social work ethical standards are diverse and have adapted and shifted over time as social workers find their niche in specific communities. The National Association of Social Workers’ (NASW) Code of Ethics (1999) core

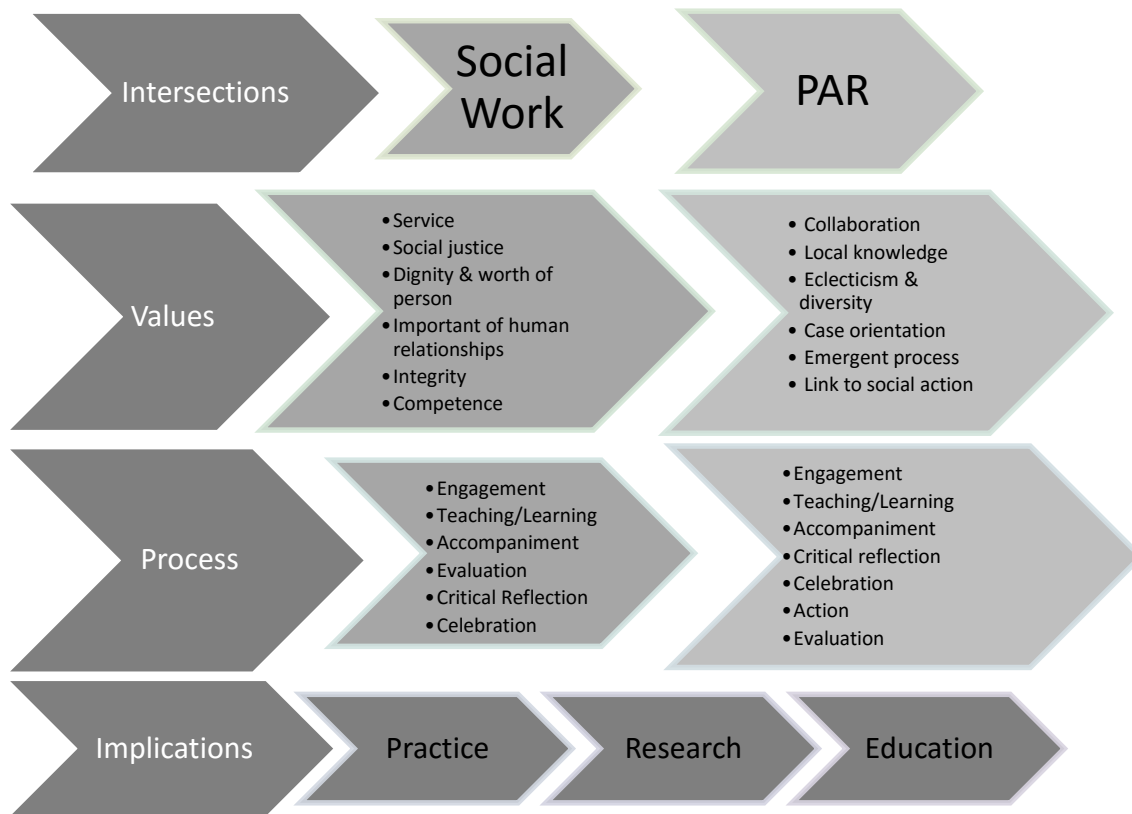


Figure 2: Intersections of SW and PAR

values include service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of the human relationships, integrity, and competence (NASW, 1999). Finn and Jacobson (2008) reference the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Black Social Workers, pointing out that “the code challenges the value of ‘professional distance’ between worker and ‘client’...it rejects notions of social worker neutrality” (p. 130). These are just two examples of the values and ethics of social work. Social work ethics are always underscored by an emphasis on social justice and well-being, and are always shaped by community values and the social worker’s role in a particular context (Finn & Jacobson, 2008).

Finn and Jacobson (2008) amplify the values of the NASW Code of Ethics, urging us to place an emphasis on social-justice-oriented practice. They have developed

the Just Practice Framework, “a framework for SW practice that builds upon five key themes: *meaning, context, power, history, and possibility*” (p. xvii). It is rooted in critiques of knowledge development and praxis (Finn & Jacobson, 2008). Praxis in social work mirrors PAR’s values in personal reflection as we work in partnership to understand ourselves and the world we live in.

Social work ethics are parallel to key features of PAR, which include collaboration, incorporation of local knowledge, eclecticism and diversity, case orientation, emergent process, and linking scientific understanding to social action (Greenwood, Whyte and Harkavy, 1993). Reason and Bradbury (2001a) state, “action research is a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview which we believe is emerging at this historical moment” (p. 1). When we overlay the values of social work with those of participatory action research, it becomes evident that social work values are the key features of PAR.

PAR and Social Work Process: Challenging Social Silences

Participatory action research is foundational social work, especially in considering the multiple intersections between social work and PAR processes. Social work practice can inform approaches to PAR while PAR can inform the interpretation and development of social work practice, research, and education. The Just Practice process of social work practice (engagement, teaching/learning, action, accompaniment, evaluation, critical reflection and celebration) can serve as a practice orientation for PAR (Finn and Jacobson, 2008). To illustrate, PAR as foundational social work can include engaging

with stakeholders to understand needs, teaching skills while learning from stakeholders, and accompanying stakeholders as they navigate decision-making systems (Branom, 2012).

Participatory action research as foundational social work practice is most evident during social work interventions intended to facilitate community-driven change.

Participatory action research can be framed as a social work research endeavor that incorporates social work intervention on the micro, mezzo, or macro level. Inversely, social work interventions can evolve into PAR projects as people ask questions and develop a desire to more deeply understand an experience. A social work community organizer's skill set is translatable to those of a PAR researcher, bringing people together to identify issues affecting their communities and take action (Branom, 2012). Both require skills in group facilitation, engagement, sharing power, and self-reflection.

Finn, Jacobson, and Campana (2004) highlight how social work group work and PAR can inform each other. Specifically, PAR approaches of popular education and popular theatre can inform creative methods of expression in group work (Finn, Jacobson, & Campana, 2004). In PAR teams, social workers can use skills to foster strengthening environments within a research context, creating opportunities for positive outcomes related to mutual relationships, empowerment, or self-awareness.

Feminist-oriented social workers inherently embrace values of PAR in social work practice, research, and education, including an emphasis on knowledge for social transformation and moving from the personal to political (Finn, 1994). This transferrable skill set includes the ability to draw connections between human experiences and identify patterns of oppression. While most evident in feminist social work practice and research,

given the general social work practice approach, all of social work can utilize PAR as a foundational framework incorporating the values of collaboration, incorporation of local knowledge, eclecticism and diversity, case orientation, emergent process, and linking scientific understanding to social action (Greenwood, Whyte and Harkavy, 1993).

PAR Inquiries of Immigration and Resettlement

Participatory action research is a critical, justice-oriented research approach, effective in facilitating systemic inquiries around the experiences of individuals with refugee or immigrant background (Yu & Liu, 1986). The social work Just Practice framework (considering meaning, history, context, power, and possibility of people/communities) (Finn & Jacobson, 2008) has been applied to frame an analysis of PAR as foundational social work in understanding experiences of immigration and resettlement (see Figure 3). Each concept is defined and an analysis of how the concept integrates PAR and SW described below.

Power in Social Work Research and Practice

Power plays a vital role in shaping and informing research and practice relationships in both social work and PAR. “The idea of power embodies purpose or intent” (Finn & Jacobson, 2008, p. 44). In social work, power has positive and negative interpretations, meaning “exclusion, domination, and repression,” as well as a power that “produces things...induces pleasure...forms knowledge” (Finn & Jacobson, 2008, p. 44). Finn and Jacobson (2008) draw on the work of Townsend, Zapata, Rowlands, Alberti, and Mercado (1999) highlighting four forms of power: power over, from within, with,

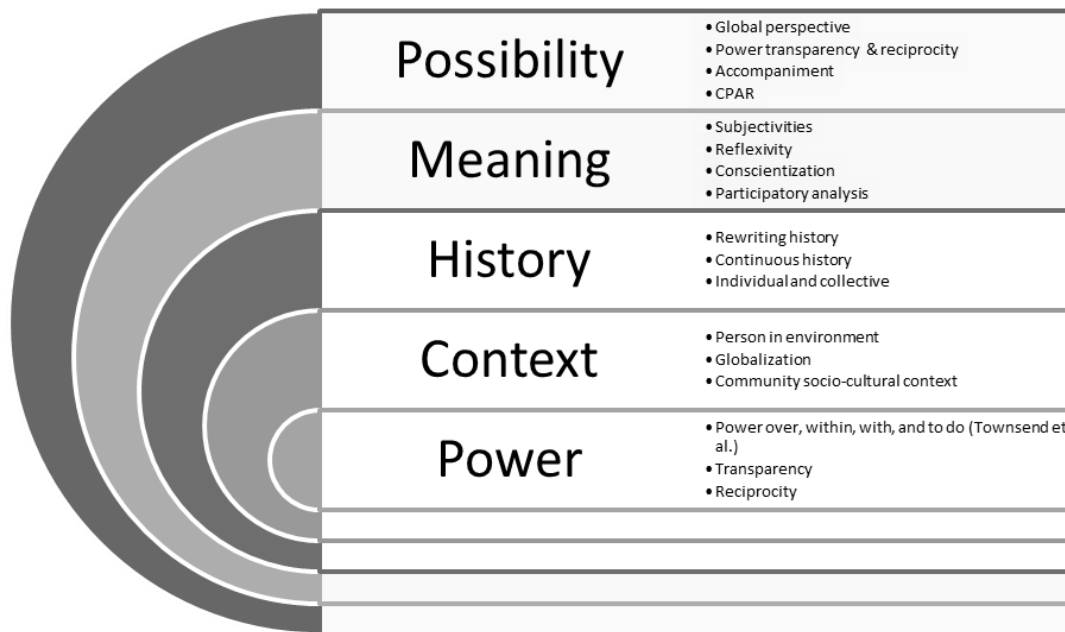


Figure 3: PAR as Foundational Social Work

and to do. For example, an outside researcher who speaks a dominant language, is familiar with dominant cultural norms, and has control of resources such as access to money for research or political change agents, may hold initial power over a research process with people new to the community.

One way to consider power in PAR relationship is within the context of reciprocity. An ethic of reciprocity lays the foundation for shared power and opportunities to engage in what Townsend et al. (1999) would describe as power with versus power over. Maiter et al. (2008) describe reciprocity as “the respectful nature of good research relationships and exchanges that are essential in participatory and other types of research” (p. 307). While social work researchers may do their best to be transparent and build capacity with community-members to lead relevant research, existing societal power dilemmas may come to a head in the research relationship (Maiter et al., 2008). As research teams come to identify the role that power is playing in the

process, they can begin to challenge and redefine these dynamics within their team (Healy, 2001). Social work action researchers can consider the many ways power plays out in their process by engaging in regular self-reflection to identify assumptions and expectations they are bringing to the table. This redefinition of power dynamics requires mutual trust between outside researchers and community members, an important skill in social work practice.

Understanding and describing experiences of immigration and resettlement with PAR provides a unique opportunity to connect communities across borders and around the world. Koirala-Azad (2009-2010) describes a PAR project with Nepali community members, connecting San Francisco-based Nepali refugees with community-based projects in Nepal. Koirala-Azad (2009-2010) shares, “the projects...reflected a commitment to challenging existing power inequities between the United States and Nepal” (p. 85). This unique examination of power across borders is one of the many opportunities that can emerge in the process of PAR with individuals of refugee or immigrant background.

Meaning-Making as a Transformative Process

A critical component of PAR is examining how we make meaning of experiences (Reason & Bradbury, 2001a). In social work, meaning-making is defined as “how others make sense of their world and the commonalities, tensions, and contradictions this creates as we compare their meanings with our own” (Finn & Jacobson, 2008, p. 42). Meaning-making incorporates the development of subjectivities, exploring the way we make sense of the world and feelings we attach to experiences, and responding to existing

subjectivities, or the way others perceive you (Cahill, 2007).

Meaning-making incorporates reflexivity and conscientization (Finn & Jacobson, 2008; Freire, 1992; Reason & Bradbury, 2001a). When researchers practice reflexivity, they come to experience critical consciousness (Freire, 1992). PAR researchers engage in critically conscious reflexive practice as they “thoroughly analyze and carefully monitor personal beliefs and ... behaviors about the value of cultural diversity,” a critical process in better understanding experiences of immigrating and resettling (Gay & Kirkland, 2003, p. 182). Consider the PAR project where a co-researcher who had been resettled from Somalia described her world turning upside down as she came to interpret domestic violence in a new way, while another co-researcher simultaneously identified this as an opportunity to expand social work practice (Gustafson & Illuebbey, 2013).

As individuals with refugee and immigrant background engage in critical consciousness and challenge dominant discourse and existing subjectivities, PAR creates opportunities to amplify subjectivities. This is critical in shaping social work practice and pedagogy. For example, mainstream media focuses on destruction of war, and while a reality, the media itself tends to speak *for* people, portraying communities as victims, making meaning *for* communities. This becomes dominant discourse of immigration and refugee resettlement, ignoring strengths and assets within communities, and can mislead social workers in practice with resettled communities. While acknowledging destruction might be one-way people make sense of war, there might also be unique elements of spirituality, family, and resiliency generated when working *with* communities (Lykes, 2013).

Participatory analysis of community-generated findings is a vehicle for making

meaning or making sense of our place in society (Cahill, 2007; Francisco, 2013; Lykes, 2013). Different communication methods can be utilized simultaneously as analysis and dissemination mediums that transcend language barriers, including theatre of the oppressed (Boal, 2000), drawings, and photographs (Lykes, 2013). These participatory approaches can be critical to analysis in social work research with immigration and resettlement.

Writing Our History

Social workers consider history as made up of collections of stories based on the perceptions, experiences, and emotions of the storyteller (Finn & Jacobson, 2008). A critical reflection on history and how it has been documented is one of the first steps to social-justice-oriented action (Finn & Jacobson, 2008). Participatory action research provides opportunities for social workers to facilitate research and practice with communities to rewrite historical accounts written about their experiences of immigration and inform the pedagogy of social work practice.

Consider the continuous history of war. A hegemonic view of war highlights two sides of fighting, excluding its cyclical nature and the experiences of those caught in the middle (Lykes, 2013). Interpreting war as cyclical requires an understanding that communities with histories of war may experience economic disruption, hyper-masculinity, and displacement that does not necessarily end when fighting subsides (Lykes, 2013). Rewriting historical accounts of war from the perspectives of the individuals/families affected by war, asking questions posed by the people who lived the history, provides opportunities to redefine impacts of war and identify needs and

strengths of that community.

A community's history of war is just one example of the complexity of history and the way it may be recounted for future generations. Francisco (2013) draws on the impact of histories of forced migration. Questioning dominant histories of migration (considering documented, undocumented, individual, and communal histories of migration) to inform research leads to a critical historical perspective. Participatory action research creates opportunities to express individual and collective stories that challenge existing rhetoric framing migration as a preferred or voluntary choice (Francisco, 2013). This, in turn, can inform social work action research that brings attention to the systemic nature of oppression and guides social work practice to question international modernization impact on local environments and economies that lead to forced migration.

Participatory action research to examine history informs the way we see and live in the world today (Freire, 1992; Koirala-Azad, 2009-2010). As social workers come to know the role we have played in silencing or being silenced, we can begin to more deeply understand how to break out of this cycle. Freire (1992) reflects that in understanding our role as oppressed or oppressor we begin to challenge structures that perpetuate oppression. Examining our experiences as oppressed or oppressor does not pigeon hole us into that identity, but in questioning this role and the history associated with it, we begin to identify with the questioning self as an informed consumer of history (Finn & Jacobson, 2008; Freire, 1992).

Context of Immigration and Resettlement

Finn and Jacobson (2008) define social work context as “the background and set of circumstances and conditions that surround and influence particular events and situations” (p. 43). One of the reasons PAR and social work are compatible has to do with their mutual focus on person-in-environment and the context of individual/community experiences. Experiences of immigration and resettlement are entangled in a context of globalization. When collaborative social work research teams incorporate global context into process and analysis, the silencing webs of injustice begin to fray as researchers recognize how local experiences are tied to global political decisions (Cahill, 2010; Fals-Borda, 1987).

Participatory action research needs to be collaborative to unearth the socio-cultural context of the community (Collie, Liu, Podsiadlowski, and Kindon, 2010). In doing so, researchers develop trust and co-create projects that have impact, support community agendas, and strengthen relational networks (Collie et al., 2010). With regards to experiences of immigration in a “big white state,” Cahill (2010) and a team of researchers unearthed contextual dominant discourse of immigration as a problem. Cahill (2010) states, “The language within this framework reflects a privileged standpoint and is anything but neutral” (p. 152). Participatory action research generated opportunities to ask meaningful questions related to the context of a particular community, to amplify the context of discourse, and in so doing identified the space for critical action. Social work practice in this community can learn a lot from the questions and knowledge generated from this project.

Possibilities for PAR as Foundational Social Work

In social work, considering possibility is considering “what is historically possible and to move beyond the past and the present to contemplate alternatives for the future” (Finn and Jacobson, 2008, p. 47). There is exciting possibility for participatory action research as foundational social work practice, research, and education of immigration and resettlement. One example of this possibility is considering the value a global perspective brings to the process of social work pedagogy, practice, and research. A global perspective in social work action research might consider multiple methodologies of research, the development of research questions that consider global impacts, and dissemination strategies that consider traditional as well as novel communication. Stakeholders of diverse backgrounds can come together to develop a community meaning-making process around shared experiences.

Reflecting on power dynamics within the PAR collective is a critical part of the process, but it is an element that social worker PAR researchers tend to underreport (Healy, 2001). Oftentimes there is an unequal distribution of power in research collectives, at least at the start of research projects, as most research is facilitated or initiated by one or a select few members of the research team (Healy, 2001). Power transparency can be an impetus for change, a guiding force, and it is important for social work researchers to examine and document these powerful processes in examining immigration and resettlement, and incorporate the lessons learned into social work pedagogy and practice (Healy, 2001). We come to learn more about ourselves as individuals, as a collective, and about the process when we engage in critical dialogue about power in research (Healy, 2001; Koirala-Azad, 2009-2010).

In considering the possibility of the ethics of PAR foundations in social work, reciprocity can be incorporated into PAR processes as an underlying assumption and value (Maiter et al., 2008). Incorporating reciprocity as an ethic of all PAR projects integrates a moral process into the research experience (Maiter et al., 2008). Mutual reciprocity is a process requiring a power revolution rather than an end product, characterized by continually evaluating mutual interests and values at the table and ownership of the process. Research teams of outside researchers and community insiders can develop reciprocity by developing trust and transparency in the research team. Developing trust and transparency requires time, patience, and continual reflexivity. Outside researchers who see themselves as experts need to explicitly incorporate and amplify community expertise from the beginning of the research process and examine sources of knowledge throughout the process to ensure their own positionality as “expert” is continually challenged. As communities come to develop relationships of reciprocity in the research team, they can begin to identify how the research relationship holds potential to create meaningful change, both in the academic and local community. In the context of PAR, this can lead to an expectation that reciprocal action will be taken to address community concerns and this responsibility holds a moral weight as researchers move through the research process (Maiter et al., 2008).

Another possibility of PAR as a foundation for social work is to consider community accompaniment in PAR. Accompaniment, in the sense of social justice work, means, “to go with, to support and enhance the process” (Finn & Jacobson, 2008, p. 317). In social work action research, this means bearing witness to a community’s existing research and inquiry processes and identifying possibilities for future collaboration and

deeper conversations around power and meaning. Hall (2001) supports this, pointing out that academics can have “weight with our words” and “bear witness” to already existing research processes (p. 174).

Finally, social workers can utilize PAR with individuals of refugee or immigrant background that is uniquely situated in a critical theoretical framework. Referred to as critical participatory action research (CPAR) by Torre et al. (2012), this research stems from action research oriented in social justice and challenges the use of PAR as a way to co-opt knowledge (Torre, 2009). Critical PAR traces what Fox et al. (2010) refer to as circuits of injustice. Torre et al. (2012) clarify CPAR as an approach to PAR where researchers are intentional in documenting “the grossly uneven structural distributions of opportunities” (p. 171). While all PAR projects *should* take this approach to research, participation can be coopted as a tool to engaging hard to reach populations (Torre et al., 2012). Research nested in a critical theoretical framework incorporates elements of critical race theory, feminism, or queer theory (Torre et al., 2012) and urges research teams to develop questions, methods, analysis, and action in a way that challenges larger systems of oppression related to race, gender, and class.

Contributions to Social Work Research, Practice, and Education

Social work research, practice, and education have much to gain in utilizing PAR as a foundational framework, especially when considering immigration and resettlement. Utilizing PAR as foundational social work research allows social workers to incorporate the values of our field into the research process, from the development of research questions to the dissemination of knowledge. Collaborating with stakeholders as

researchers creates opportunities to ask questions that move away from dominant discourse and theories describing experiences of immigration and resettlement, as well engage in new and creative analysis processes that not only contribute to our library of tools for analysis but also strengthen and highlight community assets.

Utilizing participatory action research as foundational social work generates community-based practice models. Practice with individuals of refugee and immigrant background that is informed by PAR shifts focus away from individual pathology and generalizing experiences towards more unique cultural understandings and structural complexities of experiences. Utilizing PAR as foundational social work will create more opportunities for social workers to ask questions and challenge assumptions in their practice, entering practice relationships not only as practitioners but as social work practitioner researchers. The existing social work and PAR processes are already closely aligned, and incorporating the two only strengthens both.

Participatory action research makes significant contributions to the pedagogy of social work. The incorporation of PAR findings into social work education provides opportunities for social work practitioners to learn about and value diverse and culturally responsive techniques to working with individuals with refugee and immigrant background. In addition, incorporating findings from PAR projects into the classroom sets the precedent that community-based knowledge is relevant and critical to the foundations of social work practice. This is an opportunity for the field of social work to situate itself as critical thinking and devoted to challenging oppressive structures within academia.

Summary

Participatory action research is an epistemological approach uniquely suited to the field of social work and to engaging with individuals of refugee and immigrant background. The historical progression of PAR to capture experiences of individuals with refugee or immigrant background includes the work of Jane Addams and Kurt Lewin (Adelman, 1993; Finn & Jacobson, 2008). In addition to this, PAR emerged in a context of globalization, as communities came together to challenge negative impacts of neoliberal policies of production (Finn, 1994).

The Just Practice Framework, typically used to frame social work practice, has been applied to raise questions around meaning, context, power, history, and possibility of PAR with individuals of refugee and immigrant background (Finn & Jacobson, 2008). This has laid the foundation for PAR as a research approach uniquely suited to the field of social work, specifically in examining experiences of immigration and resettlement. Future possibilities have been identified as considerations for PAR projects with communities that include individuals of refugee and immigrant background.

The possibilities for PAR include bringing diverse communities together (Torre, 2009), utilizing PAR as a space to develop new subjectivities (Cahill, 2007), engaging in a critical discussion of power evolutions in the PAR process (Healy, 2001; Koirala-Azad, 2009-2010), including an ethic of reciprocity in the PAR process (Maiter et al., 2008), and considering community accompaniment as an approach to participatory action research with individuals of refugee and immigrant background (Finn & Jacobson, 2008; Hall, 2001). Finally, CPAR holds great possibility as a paradigm uniquely suited to engaging in social work research that unearths circuits of injustice, emphasizes

engagement, and integrates critical theoretical frameworks throughout the research process (Fox et al., 2010; Torre, Fine, Stoudt, & Fox, 2012).

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This chapter will discuss the implications and conclusions from chapters 2, 3, and 4. PAR has been presented as a foundational framework for social work practice and research on immigration and resettlement, creating opportunities for social workers to reclaim the social justice orientation of the field. A review of the history of social work revealed its evolution from a field of research and practice focused on challenging systems of oppression to a field focused on the individual function *within* systems of oppression.

The purpose of this dissertation is to present a new foundational framework for social work research and practice of immigration and resettlement that incorporates social work and participatory action research. In doing so, Community Voices for Housing Equality was presented as an example of how PAR and social work come together to produce valuable place-based knowledge that amplifies the unique experiences of individuals with refugee and immigrant background. The PAR analysis took the findings from personal to a larger structural analysis of systemic racism in the housing and rental market. The three articles come together to highlight how PAR and social work come together to challenge circuits of injustice.

Community Voices for Housing Equality

Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE) collects and analyzes experiences of the low-income tenants of refugee and immigrant background, utilizing a participatory action research approach. This study illustrates how PAR can be used to challenge dominant discourse surrounding low-income tenants' experiences and utilize findings to inform social work practice that challenges larger systems of oppression.

The experience of low-income tenants with refugee or immigrant background came across as a shared experience between tenants who are not White, English speaking, or comfortable with the rental system. In general, the shared experience as individuals with refugee or immigrant background led to a collective concern for others. The findings from CVHE have theoretical and practical social work implications that span the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of the field. Responding to these findings contributes to improving the tenant-landlord relationship, decreasing unsubstantiated charges, and decreasing mobility in the community. There is an urgent need to increase trust between low-income tenants and landlords.

Practically, participants suggested starting a coalition where low-income tenants and landlords bring together responses to current issues and solutions. Making translation mandatory for important documents is critical for understanding rights, roles, and responsibilities. Making mediation mandatory for tenants and landlords would increase access to rights and improve relationships. Providing intensive training on tenant-landlord relationship to agencies or case managers might increase opportunities for mediation. Providing consistent and frequent advocacy and legal representation for low-income renters would also increase renters' access to rights. Individuals with refugee

status who are unfamiliar with renting should receive extensive training, with effective teaching principles, on how to navigate the tenant-landlord relationship.

Theoretically, this research illustrates the benefit of placing low-income tenants at the center of the housing discussion, particularly individuals with refugee and immigrant background. In doing so, it becomes possible to draw connections between personal experiences and larger political structures, particular when it comes to issues of power and race. Given the lack of research centered on the experience of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background, future research can examine the magnitude of these experiences. Research can be facilitated that examines the cultural intersections of the tenant experience with communities of refugee and immigrant background. Social work practice can also be informed by understanding relationships between tenant-landlord experiences and housing outcomes of low-income renters with refugee and immigrant background.

PAR as Foundational Social Work

Social work research, practice, and education have much to gain in utilizing PAR as a foundational framework, especially when considering immigration and resettlement. Utilizing PAR incorporate the values of social work into the research process, from the development of research questions to the dissemination of knowledge. Collaborating with stakeholders as researchers creates opportunities to ask questions that move away from dominant discourse and theories describing experiences of immigration and resettlement, as well as engage in new and creative analysis processes that not only contribute to our library of tools for analysis but also strengthen and highlight community

assets.

Utilizing participatory action research as foundational social work generates community-based practice models. Practice with individuals of refugee and immigrant background that is informed by PAR shifts focus away from individual pathology and generalizing experiences towards more unique cultural understandings and structural complexities of experiences. Utilizing PAR as foundational social work will create more opportunities for social workers to ask questions and challenge assumptions in their practice, entering practice relationships not only as practitioners but also as social work practitioner researchers. The existing social work and PAR processes are already closely aligned, and incorporating the two only strengthens both.

Participatory action research has significant contributions to the pedagogy of social work. The incorporation of PAR findings into social work education provides opportunities for social work practitioners to learn about and value diverse and culturally responsive techniques to working with individuals with refugee and immigrant background. In addition, incorporating findings from PAR projects into the classroom sets the precedent that community-based knowledge is relevant and critical to the foundations of social work practice. This is an opportunity for the field of social work to situate itself as critical thinking and devoted to challenging oppressive structures within academia.

Summary Implications

This dissertation has significant research and practice implications for the field of social work. Individuals with refugee and immigrant background have unique

experiences that cannot be fully understood by relying only on generalizing research methods. Participatory action research is an approach to research that fosters innovation in social work. It is also an approach to research that falls in line with social work values and therefore should be understandable and consumable by social work researchers.

Social workers, in general, can start to utilize participatory action research more frequently. This would include centering research on the experiences of those typically underrepresented in research and tweezing out circuits of injustice (Fine, 1992). In doing so, social workers will increase the capacity of communities to develop findings that are typically used to inform policy that affects them.

More specifically, participatory action research can deepen our understanding of immigration and resettlement by inserting a global perspective from the beginning of research development. Social work researchers who may not have global practice experience can build trust with communities with immigration and resettlement experiences to develop research questions. The researcher does not make assumptions or have to become a cultural expert. This provides a great opportunity to insert social work values into the PAR process and utilize findings to develop culturally relevant practice. A global perspective in PAR creates opportunities to foster questions around immigration and resettlement and amplify experiences that may be pushed to the margins with generalized research methods.

To this end, the Just Practice Framework is an excellent social-justice-oriented framework that can be used to shape participatory action research projects examining immigration and resettlement. This framework can guide action research teams, and the questions posed in the framework leave room for a diversity of responses. In

considering the concept of possibility in the Just Practice Framework, this can lend itself to the development of innovative and culturally relevant practice and future research questions.

Limitations and Future Research

There was not enough time to engage in a thorough systematic review of social workers' engagement with PAR, and this was a limitation of this dissertation. There may be more examples of PAR in social work that could contribute or strengthen a framework of PAR as foundational social work. Additionally, this framework is largely theoretical at this point and can be strengthened as more social workers utilize the Just Practice Framework to shape and describe PAR projects to examine immigration and resettlement.

Future research with regards to PAR as a foundational framework in examining experiences of immigration and resettlement could include two systematic reviews. One systematic review would review PAR in examining experiences of immigration and resettlement in the U.S. Findings would amplify how PAR has been facilitated in a way that respects cultural diversity, considers experiences in a global context, and takes into consideration the forces that contribute to immigration. Another systematic review would review the use of PAR in the social work field. Doing so would create opportunities to identify gaps and strengths in social work PAR facilitation and implications for future PAR and social work research. These systematic reviews would significantly contribute to the PAR and social work fields.

Additionally, future research could include social work PAR that examines experiences of immigration and resettlement. This is dependent on if or how a

community identifies this as a research question. A social worker who facilitates a project such as this might include the Just Practice framework to develop research questions with the team. The social worker would also be explicit in highlighting the use of social work skills in the PAR process and the relevance of findings in informing social work practice.

Reflection of Researcher Positionality

I kept a research journal throughout this process, beginning even before the development of CVHE. My journal included personal feelings and interpretations of research findings scribbled alongside drawings and meeting notes. My earlier entries illustrated my discomfort with not being able to find a research a question. It was at this time that I really came to terms with my discomfort with not being in control of the research process. This discomfort surprised me a bit, however, in retrospect, it makes sense that I wanted to control this big project at such a chaotic time in my life.

My journal entries describe moments when I was most invigorated and inspired during and immediately following research activity, such as meetings with the research team and facilitating groups. However, when too much time went by without meeting, I expressed frustration, feeling like we were not moving fast enough or feeling like I was “doing PAR wrong.” It was at these times that I reached out to my committee for support and guidance, and I am grateful for the weekend chats and supportive nudges.

My positionality shifted over the course of the research project. In the beginning of the research project, I felt weary of my role as a lead investigator in a research approach that values equal distributions of power. I worried that my own motives as a

doctoral candidate would be the driving force throughout the life of the research, and this would hinder co-researchers' ownership of the research project, findings, and action. As time went on, I began to see co-researchers take on tasks that signaled to me more ownership in the research project, such as initiating the creation of a logo and joint ownership of analysis and theoretical coding.

Instead of trying to control the progress of the research team, I let go of control. Instead of looking outward to the team to analyze how co-researchers were contributing, I looked inward and reflected on my own discomfort and realized that this need to control researcher participation did not line up with my values as a participatory action researcher and instead stemmed from my training as a traditional researcher and doctoral student. As I reflected inward, I began to experience the development of trust within the team along with increasing participation from co-researchers. For me to force this process would have certainly pushed team members away.

My gratitude at being a part of this research project has been a driving force over the last three years. The relationships I have built with the research team and the community have helped me to balance my control of the research process, as I have realized having some control is part of my contribution and letting go of control creates opportunities to engage co-researchers and develop trust in the team. I think part of balancing control comes from knowing that the research team is as invested in this process as I am. The shared ownership of CVHE has not happened over night. All co-researchers are invested and this will continue to strengthen over time as we collaborate and work with our current research findings and develop more action and research projects.

Conclusion

Community Voices for Housing Equality (CVHE) is a participatory action research project that centers the experiences of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background at the center of the housing discussion. From the facilitation and analysis of eight focus groups with low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background, CVHE found experiences of low-income tenants with refugee and immigrant background include lack of housing options, inhibiting communication, the fine print, language barriers, barriers to accessing and understanding rights, and stereotyping. These specific experiences inform larger analytic themes of lack of transparency, feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness, and lack of landlord accountability. Participants described negotiations of power throughout their experiences, which describe how tenants with refugee and immigrant background survive and maintain stable housing within the power-imbalanced environment.

Participatory action research as foundational social work has implications for social work research, practice, and pedagogy. Community Voices for Housing Equality findings illustrate this. Future social work research can center the voices of tenants with refugee and immigrant background, include a thorough policy analysis, and examine the economic implications of eviction and development of affordable housing. Implications for social work practice include social workers acting as or using mediation, ensuring translators are present for landlord communication, developing a landlord/tenant taskforce, advocating for consistent legal access for low-income tenants, engaging in case manager training or training future case managers in housing related policy, ensuring refugee resettlement into stable homes, and advocating for policy that increases the

development of affordable homes. Finally, CVHE has implications for social work pedagogy, including creating place-based information for students, shifting students' perspectives from stakeholders as subjects to co-researchers, creating opportunities for students to engage in meaningful dialogue regarding housing and race, and incorporating students in future PAR projects.

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APPENDIX A

IRB MATERIALS

English Consent Cover Letter

Consent Cover Letter **Community Based Participatory Research on Tenant Landlord Issues**

The purpose of this research study is to better understand the experiences of renters in Salt Lake County. We are doing this study because we want to develop solutions to issues that may currently exist for renters with lower incomes in Salt Lake County.

We would like to ask for your participation in an upcoming focus group, which will take about an hour of your time. We cannot promise any direct benefit for taking part in this study. However, possible benefits include that the information you share in these focus groups will help us to take action to ensure that renters have fair experiences when working with landlords.

The risks of this study are minimal. You may feel upset thinking about or talking about personal information related to renting. These risks are similar to those you experience when discussing personal information with others. If you feel upset from this experience, or fear landlord retaliation, you can tell the researcher, and he/she will tell you about resources available to help.

Your name and contact information will not be included in this study, however, due to the nature of a focus group, your identity cannot be completely protected. With your permission, we will audio record the focus groups and type the audio on computers that are password protected. Once we type up the audio recordings, the audio will be deleted.

If you have any questions, complaints, or if you feel you have been harmed by this research please contact Kara Mileski, Principal Investigator, College of Social Work, University of Utah at 406-270-7168.

Contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) if you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant. Also, contact the IRB if you have questions, complaints or concerns which you do not feel you can discuss with the investigator. The University of Utah IRB may be reached by phone at (801) 581-3655 or by e-mail at irb@hsc.utah.edu.

Participation in this study and the focus group is voluntary. You can choose not to take part. You can choose not to finish the focus group or respond to any questions you prefer not to answer without penalty or loss of benefits.

By participating in the focus group, you are giving your consent to participate.

We sincerely appreciate your time and participation in this focus group. Your input about these issues is very valuable.

Spanish Consent Cover Letter

Carta de Consentimiento**Encuesta de Participación Comunitario entre Arrendador y Arrendatario**

El proposito del estudio de esta encuesta es para mejor entender las experiencias de arrendadores en el Condado de Salt Lake. Estamos conduciendo este estudio con el fin de desarrollar soluciones a ciertos casos existentes para arrendadores de bajo ingreso en el condado de Salt Lake.

Queremos pedirle su participación en un grupo de enfoque que tendremos y que tomara como una (1) hora de su tiempo. No podemos prometer ningun beneficio directo por participar en este estudio. Mas sin embargo, posible beneficios incluye que la información que usted comparta en estos grupos de enfoque pueda ayudarnos a tomar acción para asegurar que arrendadores tengan experiencias justas al trabajar junto con los arrendatarios.

Los riegos de este estudio son minimos. Tal vez se sienta enojado al pensar y hablar sobre informacion personal relacionado con arrendar (rentar). Estos riegos son similares a los que cuando discute información personal con otras personas. Si le molesta esta experiencia o tiene miedo de algun problema con su arrendatario, comentelo con el o la encuestadora y el/ella le dira donde acudir por ayuda.

Su nombre y información de contacto no seran incluidos en este estudio, sin embargo, debido a la naturaleza del grupo de enfoque , su identidad no sera completamente protegido. Con su permiso, utilizaremos sistema de audio para grabar los grupos de enfoque y escribiremos con computadoras con contraseña protegido. Una vez que escribamos lo grabado, el audio sere borrado.

Si tiene preguntas o reclamos o si siente que ha sido dañado por esta encuesta, favor contactar a Kara Mileski Investigadora Principal, Colegio de Trabajadores Sociales , Universidad de Utah al telefono [\(406\)-270-7168](tel:406-270-7168).

Contacte a la Camara Institucional de Reviso (IRB) siglas en Ingles, si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante de esta encuesta. Tambien puede contactar al IRB si tiene preguntas y reclamos que no se sintio a gusto de preguntar al investigador (a). Al IRB de la Universidad de Utah puede llamar por telefono al [\(801\)-581-3655](tel:801-581-3655) o por correo electronico al irb@hsc.utah.edu.

Participación en este estudio es voluntario. Puede elegir no no tomar parte. Puede elegir no terminar el grupo de enfoque o a responder a qualquier pregunta que usded prefiera no contestar sin penalidad o perdida de beneficios.

Al participar en el grupo de enfoque , esta usted dando su consentimiento. Sinceramente agradecemos su tiempo y participación en este grupo de enfoque. Su información sobre estos asuntos son valiosos.

Somali Consent Cover Letter

Warqadii Ogalaashada

Cilmi baaris kusaabsan arimaha kiraystayaasha iyo mulkiilayaasha oo bulshada lug ku leh

Hadafka cilmi baaristani waa in ay si fiican loo fahmo waaya aragnimada kiraystayaasha ee Salt Lake County. Sababta cilmi baaristani aan usamayneyno waxay tahay waxaan dooneynaa in aan xal uheynto arrimaha xanibaya kireystayaasha dakhligooda hooseeya oo kudhaqan Salt Lake County.

Waxaan jecelnahay in aan kuweydiisno in aad ka qeyb qaadata kooxda kiiradda soo socda, taas oo qaadan doonto hal sac oo wakhtigaagi ah. balan kaama qaadeyno in aan faa'ido toos ah kaheli doontid kaqeyb qaadashada cilmi baaristani. Si kastaba ha ahaatee, faa'idooyinka suurtagalka ka mid ah in macluumaadka nala wadaagtay in ey naga caawin doonaan in ay talaabo ka qaadno si loo hubiyo in kireystayaashu cadaaladnimo loola dhaqmo marki ey la shaqeynayaan mulkiilayaasha guryaha.

Khataraha ee cilmi baaristani waa wax aad u yar. Waxaa laga yaabaa inaad murugooto markaad ka fikirayso ama ka hadlayso macluumaadka ee la xiriira kiro guri. Khatarooyinka waxay la mid yihiin kuwa aad la kulanto markii aad kala hadlayso macluumaadkaaga shakhsiyadeed dad kale. Haddii aad murugooto ka waayo-aragnimo, ama ka cabsan aargoosi mulkiilaha guriga, waxaad cilmibaadhaha u sheeg, oo isaga / iyada ayaa kuu sheegi doona oo ku saabsan khayraadka la heli karo si loo caawiyo.

Magacaaga iyo xiriir macluumaadkaaga laguma dari doono daraasaddan, si kastaba ha ahaatee, dabeecada kooxaha diiradda waxaa waaye in macluumaadkaaga dhan in labadbaadin Karin. Haddii aad noo ogolaatid, waan duubeynaa maqal ahaan kooxaha diiradda iyo markaas kadib kombuyuutar oo xiran iyaan kuqoraynaa. Marka aan qorno, duubistii maqal ahaanta waa la tirtiridoona.

Haddii aad wax su'aalo ah ama cabasho kaqabto ama aad dareemeyso in cilmibaaristan ay khatarkuukeeni fadlan waxaad la xiriirtaa: Kara Mileski, Hogaanka cilmi baaraha, College of Social Work, University of Utah 406-270-7168.

Waxaad la xiriirtaa gudiga dib u eegida Macaahida (Institutional Review Board) haddii aad kaqabto su'aalo xaqaad u leedahay cilmibaaristan. haddii aad qabtid wax su'aalo ah, cabashooyin ah, ama walwal ah kaas oo aadan u malayn in aad baaraha kala hadli karto. Kala xiriir Univeristy of Utah IRB telefoonka (801) 581-3566 ama emailka irb@hsc.utah.edu.

Ka qaybqaadashada daraasaddan iyo kooxda diiradda waa ikhtiyaari. Waxaad dooran kartaa in aadan ka qayb qaadan. Waxaad dooran kartaa in aadan dhameysan kooxda diiradda ama ka jawaabin su'aalo kasta oo aadan jecleysan adigoo wax ganaax ah lagu saarin ama waayin faa'iidooyin.

Ka soo qaybgalka kooxda diiradda, waxaad ogolaatay in aad ka mid noqoto kooxdani.

Waxaan si daacad ah kuugu mahad celineynaa aad waqtigaagi qaaliga ah iyo ka qaybgalka kooxda diiraddani. Arigtidaadi oo ku saabsan arimahan waa mid aad u qiimo badan.

English Focus Group Guide

The purpose of this focus group is to listen to you talk about your experiences, thoughts, and feelings about being a tenant in Salt Lake County. Since the focus group is being recorded, I would like to begin by going around the table and have each of you state your first name only. That will make it easier for the person writing out the recording to identify who is speaking each time without having to use names. I want to assure you that once the focus group is transcribed your individual names will be removed from the record and the file will be destroyed.

After stating your name, please tell us how long you have been a tenant and how many different places you have lived? If you'd like or if you are not a tenant right, tell us a bit about what brought you here.

- Imagine this situation. A tenant has just moved into an apartment. They started to notice some cockroaches in one of the bedroom closets. How do you think the tenant would respond to this? If the tenant went to the landlord, how do you think the landlord would respond?
- We want to hear a little bit about what it's like to rent in Salt Lake County. Can you tell us a bit about your experience as a tenant? What is it like dealing with neighbors and landlords.
- How have landlords in the different places you've lived responded to maintenance issues (e.g. leaking faucet, broken window). (Maybe probe about response time, time until issue is resolved, how they have been treated etc.)
- A lot of renters in the community have told us that they feel powerless in dealing with landlords. How has power come into play in your experience renting?
- If a renter in your complex has a problem with their apartment, what would they do? How would you expect the landlord to respond?
- Some have told us that people in our community are being charged money for things they haven't used or damages they haven't made. Have these been things you've encountered?
- Talk about the things that landlords do to make living in your apartment better.
- Talk about the things that some landlords do to make living in your apartment difficult.

Spanish Focus Group Guide

El proposito de este grupo de enfóque , es para escucharlos hablar sobre sus experiencias , pensamientos y sentimientos de ser un arrendador en el Condado de Salt Lake. Ya que este grupo sera grabado , me gustaria comenzar alrededor de la mesa y que diga su nombre sin apellido. Esto facilitara a la persona que escribe y graba identificarlo por su voz sin necesidad de utilizar nombres. Quiero asegurarles que una vez que este grupo de enfóque sea transcrito los nombres individuales seran removidos del record y el archivo sera destruido.

Despues de decir su nombre, diganos cuanto tiempo ha sido arrendador y en cuantos lugares diferentes ha vivido ? Si usted desea, o si no es un arrendador en este momento , diganos como llego o que lo hizo venir.

*Imagine esta situación. Un arrendador acaba de moverse a un apartamento. Comienzan a ver cucarachas en un closet de una recamara. Como cree que el arrendador respondera a esto ? Si el arrendador va al arrendatario con este problema , como cree que el arrendatario respondera.

*Queremos escuchar como es experiencia de arrendar (rentar) en el Condado de Salt Lake. Podrias decirnos un poco de tu experiencia como arrendador ? Cual es la experiencia de tratar con vecinos y arrendatarios.?

*En los diferentes lugares que ha usted arrendado (rentado) como han respondido los arrendatarios con casos de mantenimiento ? (ejemplo ,gotero o una ventana quebrada). (Tiempo de arreglar, cuanto tardaron en arreglarlo,y como han sido tratados etc.)

*Muchos arrendadores nos han dicho que se sienten sin el poder de hacer nada ante los arrendatarios.Como es que el poder ha sido una parte de su experiencia al ser tratado por los arrendatarios al arrendar ? (rentar)

*Si un arrendador tiene un problema en su departamento en el complejo donde tu vives, que harian? Como esperas que responda el arrendatario?

*Nos han dicho gente de nuestra comunidad que les han cobrado por cosas que no han utilizado y o daños que no han cometido.Ha tenido usted estas experiencias ?

* Hable sobre cosas que los arrendatarios hacen para que su estancia viviendo en su apartamento sea mejor.

*Hable sobre cosas que algunos arrendatarios hacen para que su estancia viviendo en su apartamento sea difícil.

Somali Focus Group Guide

Ujeedada kooxda diiradda tani waa in ay dhegeystaan waaya-aragnimadaada, fikrado, iyo dareeno ku saabsan kiraystaha degan Salt Lake County. Inkastoo hadalkeynu la duubayo, Waxaan jeclaan lahaa in aan soo wereejino oo qof kasta idinka mid ah sheego magaca hore oo kaliya. Taasi waxay fududayn doontaa qofka qoraal ubedeli doono duubistaan iyo si loo ogaado qofka hadlaya ayadoo isticmaalaan magacyada. Waxaan doonayaa in aan idiin xaqiijiyo in marka kooxda diiradda oo ubedalayaan qoraal magacyada shaqsiga waa laga saari doonaa diiwaanka iyo faylka waana la baabbi'in doonaa.

Kaddib markii aad sheegtid magacaaga, fadlan noo sheeg inta aad aheed kirayste iyo meelaha kala duwan aad ku noolayd? Haddii aad jeceshahay ama aadan aheyn kirayste, noo sheeg in yar ku saabsan waxa ku keenay halkan.

- Ka fikir xaaladdan. Kirayste hadda u guuray guri. Waxay bilaabeen in ay arkaan baraanbaro kunool maqaasiinka kuyaala qolka hurdada. Sidee baad u maleysaa kiraystuhu uu u gurman lahaa? Haddii kiraystuhu oo utago mulkiilaha guriga, sidee ayaad u malaynaysaa in mulkiiluhu u gurman lahaa?
- Waxaan rabnaa in aan maqalno in yar oo ah sida aad u aragtaan guryaha laga kiraysto Salt Lake County. Ma noo sheegi kartaa in yar ku saabsan khibradaada kiraystinimada? Ka waran sida ay tahay la tacaamulida deriska iyo mulkiilayaasha.
- Sidee meelaha kale aad guryaha ka soo kiraysay kugu jawaabaan markaad codsato in lagu hagaajiyo (markey tubada biyo kazoo dusaya, dariishad kaa jabta). (Ama sida ay kuugu soo jawaabaan codisgaada, waqtiga ay ku qaadato inay waxyaabaha aad codsaday ay xaliyaan, side bay kuula dhaqmeen iyo wixii la mid ah.)
- Inta badan dadka guryaha ijaarta waxay noo sheegeen inaysan awood lahayn markay la tacaalayaan mulkiilayaasha guryaha. Side adiga kula tahay marka laga hadlayo waxyaabaha aad awooda u leedahay markaad guri ijaaranayso?
- Haddii qof ijaar ugu jira daarta aad degan tahay dhibaato soo food saarto, maxay sameeyaan? Side adigu kula tahay qolada guryaha iska leh ugu jawaban?
- Bulshada qaarkood waxay noo sheegeen dadka waxaa lagu soo dalacdaa lacag waxyaabaha aysan isticmaalin ama aysan iyagu haleen. Adigu waxyaabahas makula soo gudboonaadeen ama mala kulantay?
- Ka hadal waxyaabaha ay mulkiilayaasha guryaha sameeyaan oo wanaajiya gurigaaga degnaan shihiis ama ayiga ay ku wanaagsan yihiin.
- Ka hadal waxyaabah ay mulkiilayaasha guryaha sameeyaan oo adkeeya gurigaaga degnaan shihiis ama ayiga ay ku xun yihiin.

English Questionnaire

Thank you for your participation! To assist us in understanding tenant's experiences in Salt Lake County, please provide us with the following information. This information is anonymous.

1) What is your country of origin? _____

2) How long have you lived in Utah? _____

3) Do you currently rent in Salt Lake County? Yes No

4) How many people live in your house/apartment? _____

5) Write how many people in your house are the following ages.

0-17 _____

18-64 _____

65+ _____

6) Please circle the amount your household makes in a year:

\$10,000-\$20,000

\$21,000-\$30,000

\$31,000-\$40,000

\$41,000-\$50,000

Spanish Questionnaire

Gracias por su participacion en apoyarnos a entender las experiencias como arrendador en el condado de Salt Lake, favor proveer la informacion siguiente. Esta informacion sera anonimo.

1) Cual es su pais de origen? _____

2) Cuantos años ha vivido en Utah ? _____

3) Vive en el condado de Utah en estos momentos ? _____

4) Cuantas personas viven en su casa/apartamento ? _____

5) Escriba cuantas personas viven en su casa/apartamento con las siguientes edades.

0 - 17 años ()

18 - 64 años ()

65 o mas ()

6) Escriba ingreso entre todos en casa/apartamento por año.

\$10,000 - \$20,000

\$21,000 - \$30,000

\$31,000 - \$40,000

\$41,000 - \$50,000

Somali Questionnaire

Waad ku mahadsan tahay ka soo qaybgalkaaga! Si aad gacan nagu siiso si aan u fahamno aragtinimada kiraystaha ee Salt Lake County, fadlan na sii macluumaadka soo socda. Macluumaadkani waa sir oo qarsoodi ah.

1) Dalkaagi hooyo waa maxay?_____

2) Mudo intee le'eg ayaad ku noolayd Utah?_____

3) Hadda Salt Lake County kiro maad ku degantahay? Haa Maya

4) Imisaa qof ayaa ku nool gurigaaga?_____

5) Da'ayaalka soo socda, qor inta qof gurigaada ku nool da'adooda.

0-17 _____

18-64 _____

65+ _____

6) Fadlan goobaabin gali lacagta qoyskaaga samaynayaan sanadkii:

\$10,000-\$20,000

\$21,000-\$30,000

\$31,000-\$40,000

\$41,000-\$50,000

English Recruitment Script

Hi there. I'm _____ and I'm with a community research group called Community Voices for Housing Equality. We are examining the tenant landlord relationship in Salt Lake County. We are talking to people in the community to find out more about the kinds of interactions tenants are having with the landlords of their apartment complexes. We are going to be conducting focus groups in the community, at various locations like the Hartland Partnership Center, Sorenson Community Center, or Asian Association. A focus group is where we bring people together to discuss a topic that we present to the group. In this case, the focus groups will be around tenants and landlords. Our hope is that the information we gather will be used to create a better experience for renters and landlords, if we find that some changes need to be made.

Your name and contact information will not be used in the focus groups and won't be connected to anything you say in the focus group. It will be completely anonymous.

The focus group will take place on _____.

If you are interested in participating in the focus groups, please share your name, phone number, and email address. We won't connect this information with what people say in the focus groups. We'll just use this information to remind you about the focus groups.

Please let us know if you have any questions. Again, my name _____ and my email address is _____.

Spanish Recruitment Script

Hola , yo soy _____ y estoy con el grupo de encuesta Voces Comunitarias por Igualdad de Vivienda . Examinamos la relación entre arrendador y arrendatario en el Condado de Salt Lake. Estamos entablando platicas con gente en la comunidad para saber mas sobre las interacciones que los arrendadores estan teniendo con sus arrendatarios en los apartamentos donde viven. Estaremos conduciendo grupos de enfoque en varios lugares de la comunidad como , Hartland Partnership Center, Sorensen Community Center, y Asia Association. Un grupo de enfóque es donde con gente como ustedes discutimos temas presentandolo en grupo. En este caso, el grupo de enfóque sera sobre arrendadores y arrendatarios . Nuestra esperanza es que , la información recabada sea utilizada para crear una mejor experiencia para arrendadores y arrendatarios si encontramos la necesidad de que cambios necesite hacerse..

Su nombre y información de contacto no seran utilizados en los grupos de enfóque y no sera conectado a nada que usted diga en el grupo de enfóque. Sera completamente anónimo.

El grupo de enfoque sera el _____.

Si esta interesado en participar en los grupos de enfóque, favor compartir su nombre, telefono, y correo electronico. No conectaremos su información con lo que la gente diga en los grupos de enfóque. Utilizaremos su información unicamente para recordarles sobre cuando habra grupos de enfóque.

Favor haganos saber si tiene preguntas. De nuevo mi nombre es _____ y mi correo electronico es _____.

Somali Recruitment Script

Iska waran. Magaceygu waa_____ waxaan ka mid a hay koox cilmi barista bulshadeed oo la yiraahdo Community Voice for Housing Equality. Waxaan baareynaa xiriirka qolada guryaha iska leh iyo kuwa ijaarta ee Salt Lake County. Waxaan ka hadleynaa dadka ka tirsan bulshada si aan u ogaano wax badan oo ku saabsan wada xiriir ka u dhaxeeya qolaha guryaha iska leh iyo kuwa ijaarta. Waxaan rabnaa inaan isku keeno kooxo ka tirsan bulshada meelo kala duwan sida Hartland Partnership Center, Sorenson Unity Center, ama Asian Association. Kooxda diiradda waa halka aan dadka isu keeno si aan u soo bandhikno mawduuca laga hadlaayo. Xaaladan ama kiiskan, kooxaha diiradda waxay noqon doontaa in aan ka wada hadalno xaaladaha kiraystayaasha iyo mulkiilayaasha. Waxaan rajeynaynaa in macluumaadka aanu soo ururinay waxaa loo isticmaali doonaa si ay u abuuraan waayo aragnimo fiican ee kireystayaasha iyo mulkiilayaasha, hadii aan helno in waxoogaa isbeddel ahi u baahan yihiin in la sameeyo.

Magacaaga iyo xiriir macluumaadkaaga loo isticmaali maayo ee kooxaha xallinta iyo lama ku xiridoono wixii aad u sheegto kooxda diiradda. Waxa ay noqon doontaa gebi ahaanba si qarsoodi ah.

Kooxda diiradda waxay dhici doontaa_____.

Haddii aad doonayso in aad ka qiibqaadato kooxaha xallinta, fadlan noo sheek magacaaga, lambarka taleefoonka, iyo cinwaanka emailka. Macluumaadkaaga laguma lifaaqi doono kooxaha diiradda.. Waxaan macluumaadkan u isticmaali doonaa si aan kuu soo xusuusino kooxaha diiradda.

Fadlan noo sheeg haddii aad qabto wax su'aalo ah. Mar kalena, magaceygu waa _____ iyo cinwaanka email-keyga waa_____.

APPENDIX B

FAIR HOUSING EXPO FLYERS



Join us for a
FAIR HOUSING EXPO

Saturday, November 21 • 12:00-3:00pm
Sorenson Unity Center
1383 South 900 West

Salt Lake's housing advocates and resources under one roof to help you!

Join us for a free legal advice clinic (12:30-3pm) where tenants get advice related to tenant and landlord issues and learn more about resources, such as:

- Salt Lake Community Action Program Mediation
- Disability Law Center
- Salt Lake County Lead Safe Program
- UNP Hartland Social Workers
- Utah Legal Services

For more information, contact Kara Byrne kara.byrne@utah.edu or 406-270-7168.



VOCES COMUNITARIAS POR IGUALDAD DE VIVIENDA

Acompañenos para una:
EXPO PARA VIVIENDA JUSTA

Sábado, Noviembre 21 • 12:00-3:00pm
 Sorenson Unity Center
 1383 South 900 West

*!!Abogados de Vivienda de Salt Lake y recursos bajo un mismo techo
 para su apoyo!!*

Acompañenos a una clínica de consejo legal gratuita (12-3).
 Consejos relacionados a problemas entre arrendadores y
 arrendatarios. Conozca sobre recursos, como:

- Mediadores Programa de Acción Comunitaria de Salt Lake (Salt Lake Community Action Program Mediation)
- Centro ley de Discapacidad (Disability Law Center)
- Trabajadores Sociales de UNP Hartland
- Servicios Legales de Utah (Utah Legal Services)

Para más información, contactar Kara Byrne kara.byrne@utah.edu o 406-270-7168